Community Based Forest Management Systems

(Case Studies from Orissa)

Shashi Kant, Neera M. Singh and Kundan K. Singh



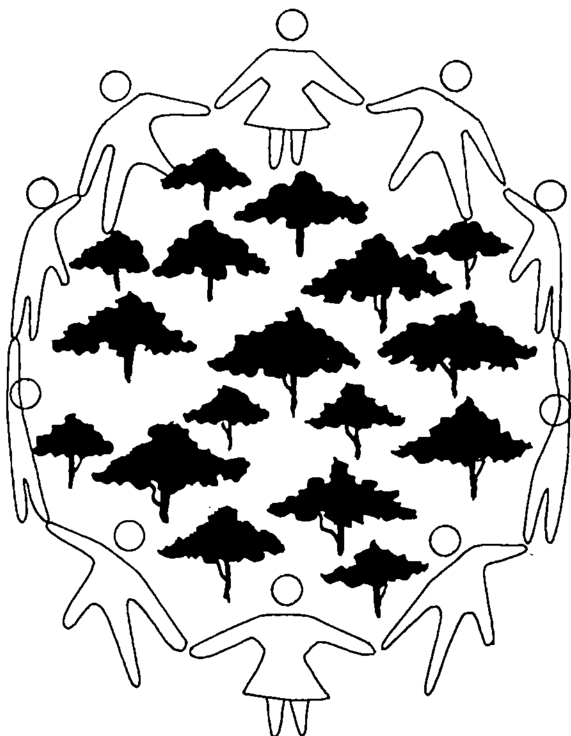


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Brikshyo' aamaro jeevan dhanō
Jagaye mati pani pawano
Briskhyo' bina jeewan nahi
Brikshyo'aamaro jeevan bhai

Trees are our life's treasure,
Offer soil, water and air
Without trees life would end,
Trees are our life's friends.

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(Case Studies from Orissa)

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To
All the villagers of the study area — from whom we have learnt so much.

But most of all to Mahatma Gandhi who, we feel would have loved to visit the villages of the study area today.

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Front Cover Photo - *A patch of Rupabalia Reserved Forest protected by Atinda village.*

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Foreword

Prior to Independence two major factors prevailed in the protection of forests. So far as Reserved Forests were concerned, the writ of Government ran effectively and, therefore, the villagers were afraid to go into the forests except to the extent that nistar rights were extended to them. In the case of village forests, however, village society undoubtedly feudally structured, had a system of protection and management which preserved these forests. After Independence, unfortunately, whilst the fear of government receded, resulting in encroachment of reserved forests, simultaneously village society was attempted to be restructured. Whilst not necessarily destroying the feudal element, this restructuring certainly led to the destruction of the village forests.

It is heartening to note that new types of protection movements have started in this country whereby Government, forest officials and village communities have all mutually come to a realisation that it is only participative management which can now save our forests. In the study conducted by Mr. Shashi Kant, Neera M. Singh and Kundan K. Singh, it is amply brought out how in three backward areas of Orissa—Binjgiri, Rupabalia and Phulbani, village communities have begun, through informal councils, to take on the job of protecting forests around their villages. In fact they seem to be doing better than the more formally structured forest protection committees set up by the Government. It is, however, interesting to note that some catalytic agent has operated before the villagers could be motivated. In the case of Binjgiri for example, it was a professor from the Utkal University, Narayan Hazari; a Middle School Headmaster, Joginath Sahu and student volunteers of the NSS who played the catalytic role. This means that even more than the NGOs, the academic communities with local roots can decisively affect events in rural India.

Equally important has been the positive role of the Forest Department, which has provided every type of support, including the active participation of forest officials at divisional level. This is a welcome change of attitude. What also emerges from the study is that the villagers themselves have realised the need to discipline themselves in exploiting the forests and are prepared to impose fines and other punishment on defaulters.

The study in question has raised important issues of policy, including a possibility of subsequent conflict between the need to preserve forests and the rapaciousness of village committee office-bearers who might be swayed by greed in future. Despite the note of caution thus sounded the study certainly gives a blueprint of an alternative system of forest management in which the village communities play a vital role.

(M.N. Buch)
Chairman
National Centre for Human
Settlement and Environment

Bhopal
16th April, 1991

Preface

Being so significantly linked to the national economy, local rural economy and rural life support system, forest resources have been subject to diverse and often conflicting national and local needs and also interference by vested interest groups. Confronted with the challenge of managing these conflicting and increasing needs while constrained by the policy environment non-conducive to decentralised management, the forest department assumed "policing" and vigilance of forest areas as the way out and sought answers in technical solutions.

Attempts to manage forest resources by alienating the local population from the forest and placing national needs above local needs, are not realistic. Local needs have to be met and will be met in any case. Most forest resources cannot be made 'unavailable' to the local population within and around these forest areas by the forest department's guards who lack 'local presence'.

Such attempts by the forest department, resulted in the gap between the forest administrators and the forest dependent local population widening and both viewing each other with hostility and blaming each other for forest destruction and misuse.

In Orissa, local communities have responded to this environment characterised by poor management of forests, receding of forests and scarcity of forest produce, by evolving community management systems for regenerating degraded forest areas through protection and use regulations.

Elsewhere, most notably in West Bengal, the Forest Department has made commendable pioneering efforts in seeking the involvement of communities for regenerating forests by entering into joint-management contracts with them. Examples of community concern for forests and environment and, action, either induced by Forest Department, NGOs, or self-initiated, are increasing throughout the country.

The study provides systematic analysis of community based forest management systems in Orissa. The philosophy and dynamics of such management systems can provide a basis for developing and strengthening of participatory forest management systems. Specifically three different case studies are presented:

— Forest resource scarce area and supported by local NGO (Binjgiri Protected Forest-District Puri),

— Forest resource scarce area and based mainly on village level organisations (Rupabalia Reserved Forest-District Dhenkanal),

— Forest resource surplus area with predominantly tribal population (District-Phulbani);

These cases have been selected to present a wide spectrum of locally evolved management systems. The first two situations have been presented in the form of case studies whereas an overview has been provided for the third.

We hope that the experiences and learning from the communities of Orissa would help in designing viable models of participatory forest management systems, and would provide a basis for developing future strategies in this regard.

The contents are broadly divided in two parts. Part I examines the features of community based forest management systems from three districts of Orissa. Part II focuses on learning from the three cases and a few suggested strategies for strengthening community based forest management systems.

The study is the result of collaboration of three organisations—Indian Institute of Forest Management, ISO/Swedforest and Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA).

The findings of the study and the facts contained in it are, however, the sole responsibility of the authors.

Shashi Kant
Neera M. Singh
Kundan K. Singh

April, 1991

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The Indo Swedish Forestry Coordination Programme provided the wherewithal for this study and for the publication of this document. The ISO/Swedforest offices in Delhi and Bhubaneswar rendered all support. For this we are thankful to the personnel of these offices, specially Mr. Anders Nystrom, Project Coordinator, Orissa for his advice and guidance.

The field work was supported by Mr. Sudhir Behera, Mr. Ashok Gaur and Mr. Charu. They also facilitated our communication with the village communities of Orissa.

We are grateful to all the villagers of the study area, and especially to the personnel of BOJBP, Kesharpur, PIPAR, Joranda, and NIPDIT, Phulbani and Nayagarh, Dhenkanal & Phulbani Forest Divisions for their help and cooperation during the field work

Some parts of this study were presented at 'The National Workshop on Sustainable Forestry' September 10-12, 1990, New Delhi; 'First Annual Meeting of International Association for Study of Common Property' September 27-30, 1990, Duke (USA) and 'National Seminar on People's Participation in Forest Resource Management' January 21-23, 1991, Bhubaneswar. The participants to these seminars subscribed useful comments. Sri M.C. Das (PCCF, Orissa), Sri S.S. Das, Consultant ISO/Swedforest, Sri D.N. Mishra (Retd. PCCF, U.P.) and Dr. K.P. Tiwari (Ex-Director IIFM) rendered constant academic support and guidance.

Prof. J.K. Das and Mr. Neel Gaurav were most willing to help us in editing the draft of the report. Mr. William R. Bentley, University of Yale, provided useful

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Sri M.N. Buch obliged by consenting to write the foreword.

Our thanks to all of you.

AUTHORS

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Abbreviations

ACF	Assistant Conservator of Forests
BDO	Block Development Officer
BOJBP	Brikshya O' Jeevar Bandhu Parishad (Friends of Trees and Living Beings) - A voluntary agency.
CCF	Chief Conservator of Forests
CPR	Common Property Resource
CPRM	Common Property Resource Management
DFO	Divisional Forest Officer
FD	Forest Department
FPC	Forest Protection Committee
GOI	Government of India
GOO	Government of Orissa
ha.	Hectares
IFS	Indian Forest Service
IIFM	Indian Institute of Forest Management
Km.	Kilometres
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly
MFP	Minor Forest Product
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NIPDIT	National Institute of Participatory Development Investigation and Training.
NSS	National Social Service
NWFP	Non Wood Forest Produce
OBC	Other Backward Classes
PCC	Project Corporate Consultant
PCCF	Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
PF	Protected Forest
PIPAR	People's Institute of Participatory Action and Research
RF	Reserved Forest
SC	Scheduled Caste
ST	Scheduled Tribe
SIDA	Swedish International Development Authority
UGO	User Group Organisation

Part I

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The economic well being of most countries is directly or indirectly related to the management and productivity of its environmental system. As societies evolve, populations grow and land-use patterns change, the regulatory mechanisms that maintained balance between man and the environment breakdown, and the use of renewable resources can no longer be effectively sustained. Management systems must be improved so that renewable resources, such as forests, can be worked on a sustained basis.

1.1 Forest Management in India

Upto the close of the eighteenth century, forests were almost treated as Open Access Resource, open for everybody's use. Certain trees were proclaimed "royal trees" by the rulers of the territories in which they flourished. With these few exceptions, however, forests were free to all, although supposedly they belonged to the ruler of the territory throughout the country in general (Stebbing E.P.; 1922-27). The free availability to society has been interpreted by some modern environmentalists as forest being common property resources. However, the forest resources in that period were generally commonly used not commonly managed. The large tracts of forests and a relatively small population gave an impression of forest being an inexhaustible resource. No need was felt to manage the resource and regulate its use.

British rule witnessed rapid exploitation of forests both by the people and the government. Forests were considered an inexhaustible exploitable mass and the ecological importance of forests remained unrecognised (Stebbing E.P.-1922-27). Finally, the rapid loss of forests due to their profligate and wasteful use, stimulated the realisation that a grave mistake had been made in allowing the forests to be used as an 'open access resource'.

With this realisation, the first step towards government control in the management of forests began in 1800. A commission was appointed to inquire into the availability

of teak in Malabar forests. Scattered efforts continued, but on all India basis, the systematic management of forests began in 1864, with the appointment of the first Inspector General of Forests. Simultaneously a decision was taken to convert the forests into State Property. The process of curtailing the unrestricted rights of people started with the Indian Forest Act 1878. This Act provided for the constitution of Reserved and Protected forests. In 'Reserved' forests, all rights of local population were abrogated but in 'Protected' forests most rights continued.

With this Act, the process of conversion of forests into state property started. With the Independence of the country, the legal provisions of state property were extended to forest areas that had been under private control. Forests under the Zamindars and Taluqadars, and the forests under the control of the then princely states, came under State control.

The status of recognition of people's rights on 'Forests as State Property' changed with time. In the first Forest Policy of 1894, public benefit was professed to be the sole aim and agriculture was given prime importance. In the revised forest policy of 1952, the emphasis shifted to national needs. Even though the policy accepted the concept of 'Village Forest' to serve the needs of the local population, the operational emphasis remained on reserving the forest for national needs. The policy also neglected the role of people in management of forests, with no recognition of the fact that the State machinery cannot manage such a vast resource in isolation. The result was fast depletion of those forests which are free from strict custodian rules (unreserved forests). Subsequently, the axe of people's need also fell on reserved forests.

As the situation became grim, problems with strict state custodial policies were highlighted by the environmentalists and social scientists. Foresters also started realising the futility of trying to "protect" forest areas from the rural masses by vigilance and policing. A few foresters started experimenting with new approaches to forest management. In some states namely West Bengal, Gujarat, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh they began discussions with communities, encouraging them to organise and protect forest lands from further degradation. In some other states such as Orissa, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh the local people took the initiative. They realised that the situation would deteriorate if corrective measures are not taken, and started evolving Community Based Forest Management Systems.

In response to the severe forest destruction and degradation and its ecological and environmental impact and severe criticism of earlier policies, policy emphasis is now changing. The Governments of Orissa and West Bengal have issued Orders on 1st August 1988 and 12th July 1989 respectively to involve people in the management of forests. The same shift in the policy emphasis has been reflected in the National Forest Policy of 1988. It lays down, "the holders of customary

rights and concessions in forest areas should be motivated to identify themselves with protection and development of forests from which they derive benefits." The Ministry of Environment and Forests has also passed a resolution on 1st June, 1990, to encourage cooperation between forest departments and communities in forest management.

1.2 Community Forest Management in Orissa: An Overview

The village communities of Orissa seem to be pioneers in designing community based forest management systems, some of them having taken it up as early as 1950-55. According to a preliminary survey (by Project Corporate Consultants, Bhubaneswar) approximately 1200 patches comprising of approximately 1,80,000 hectares of forest area (approximately 3% of total forest area) are being managed by communities as a common resource (Table 1.1). Even though a large forest area in Orissa is state property *dejure, defacto* it is a common resource managed by local communities.

The community action for forest management is concentrated in Dhenkanal, Mayurbhanj, Koraput and Sundergarh districts. However each district and even each group of villages present its own management system. Villagers have organised themselves into informal and formal organisations. The informal organisations are —'Group of village Elders', 'Village Forest Protection Committee' 'Village Council' and formal organisations are—'Village based Voluntary Organisation' and 'Village Youth Club'. In some cases the motivating factor has been presence of some voluntary organisation in the area. In other cases the design and operation of community based forest management system led to formation of local level voluntary organisation.

The new management systems being developed by the communities either by themselves or in cooperation with the forest department or NGOs, point towards a new and a promising direction in forest management, not only for India but for the rest of the developing world. They offer probably the only hope for sustainable management for forest resources.

India being such a vast country, the knowledge of different innovative systems remains localised, unless a sustained effort for its dissemination is taken up by some agency. This publication presents some experiences of communities in forest management from Orissa and share some of the authors' learnings from communities of Orissa, with other parts of India and the world.

TABLE 1.1

District wise Distribution of Forest Management by Communities

District	R.F.		P.F.		TOTAL	
	No. of* Organi-sations	Area** in ha.	No. of Organi-sations	Area in ha.	No. of Organi-sations	Area in ha.
Koraput	30	1600	184	9400	214	11000
Dhenkanal	44	12000	220	44500	264	56500
Mayurbhanj	141	40000	47	14800	188	54800
Sundergarh	3	700	231	35000	234	35700
Sub Total	218	54300	682	103700	900	158000
Keonjhar	62	3500	6	900	68	4400
Ganjam	3	1300	4	100	7	1400
Phulbani	12	500	18	600	30	1100
Puri	7	6000	4	300	11	6300
Bolangir	5	900	81	6000	86	6900
Sambalpur	1	500	26	2500	27	3000
Kalahandi	—	—	19	2000	19	2000
Cuttack	10	1000	8	400	18	1400
Balasore	15	2400	—	—	15	2400
Sub Total	115	16100	166	12800	281	28900
Grand Total	333	70400	848	116500	1181	186900

* No. of Organisations involved in forest management.
** Forest area being managed by these organisations.

* The term Community Forest Management is meant to imply management of forest patches by communities within/peripheral to these patches through regulation of use, rule systems for protecting these patches etc; management here does not mean strictly technical management of forests.

CHAPTER 2

Case Study 1: Binjgiri Protected Forest

Binjgiri hill is located 14 km southeast of Nayagarh, a sub divisional headquarter of Puri District in Orissa state. The hill is surrounded by villages—Kesharpur, Nagamundali, Binjgiri, Gamei, Puania, Angasingi, Badagorada and Sanagorada. The total area of the hill is approximately 360 ha.

The hill has dry mixed deciduous forest. The common species are—Madhuca indica, Emblica officinalis, Acacia nilotica, Dalbergia paniculata, Aegle marmelos, Bahunia purpurea, Diospyros melanoxylon, Bridelia retusa and Butea monosperma. Legal status of forest is of Protected Forest, locally known as Khesra Forest. The local people have rights for bonafide use of wood e.g. wood for agricultural implements and house construction, fuelwood etc.

2.1 Background

Before independence this area was a part of Nayagarh princely state. During that period, no scientific management of forest was undertaken. Scientific management of the forest in Orissa started with the preparation of the first working plan for the period 1930-40. However, only Reserved Forests are brought under the working plan, and no management system is prescribed for protected forests in Orissa.

The flora and fauna of Binjgiri hill were virtually undisturbed till as recently as 1940. A number of streams used to flow from it. It was subject to rapid deforestation following independence. By the late sixties, Binjgiri was completely denuded. Streams dried up. The surrounding villages faced scarcity of fuelwood, water for irrigation and threat of loss of soil fertility because of increased soil erosion. Efforts for environmental awareness and conservation then began.

Prof. Narayan Hazari, from Kesharpur village, a Reader in Utkal University, started with writing letters to villagers of Kesharpur expressing his concern for Binjgiri hill and urging them to act. This gradually had some impact on a few of the perceptive villagers. Mr. Joginath Sahu, Headmaster Middle Education (ME) school got involved and started an environmental campaign.

As a result, Kesharpur took a decision to protect a patch of Binjgiri in 1976. Though half-heartedly to start with, an NSS camp in 1978 and a Plantation Programme which was attended by the then DFO Nayagarh and the local MLA, led to the villagers of Kesharpur being involved whole-heartedly in forest protection.

As regeneration came up in the patch of Binjgiri protected by Kesharpur, the threat of pilferage by other villages around Binjgiri hill increased. The necessity of involving the other villages around Binjgiri in forest protection was recognised. The environmental awareness campaign, already initiated in early seventies in other areas through padyatras, slogans and meetings, was further strengthened and made action oriented. This had impact on other villages and resulted in seven other villages on the periphery of Binjgiri hill taking up protection of Binjgiri hill forest.

Meanwhile, other hills, like Malati hill near the village Manapur were also protected, and plantations were undertaken in other villages.

In 1982, a workshop was organised under the auspices of National Social Service (NSS) in three villages—Gamei, Nagamundali and Kesharpur. It was attended by representatives of 22 villages of the area. The workshop led to formation of "Brikshya O' Jeevar Bandhu Parishad (BOJBP)" (Friends of Trees and Living Beings) a voluntary organisation consisting of members from these 22 villages. Formation of BOJBP under the leadership of Mr. Joginath Sahu, Mr. Udayanath Khatai (a marginal farmer, Kesharpur) and Mr. Vishwanath (School Teacher) was the formalisation of efforts for forest protection and environmental conservation initiated twelve years earlier in 1970.

This led to the active management of Binjgiri hill by eight villages and fourteen villages provided support by restraining themselves from exploitation of Binjgiri hill forest (Map 1). Of these fourteen villages, eight started protection of other forest areas in their vicinity also. Details are given in Table 2.1.

The demographic data of eight villages which are managing Binjgiri is given in Table 2.2. The population varies from 182 to 1281. There is no tribal population in these villages. Significant scheduled caste population is present in only four villages: Kesharpur, Puania, Sanagorada and Angasingi. In most of the villages Khandaits are in the majority and hence in the dominant position. In Puania and Sanagorada, due to a large scheduled caste population, there is no dominant caste as such.

The main occupation is cultivation. The majority consists of small, marginal farmers and landless labourers.

Binjgiri Forest with Participating Villages

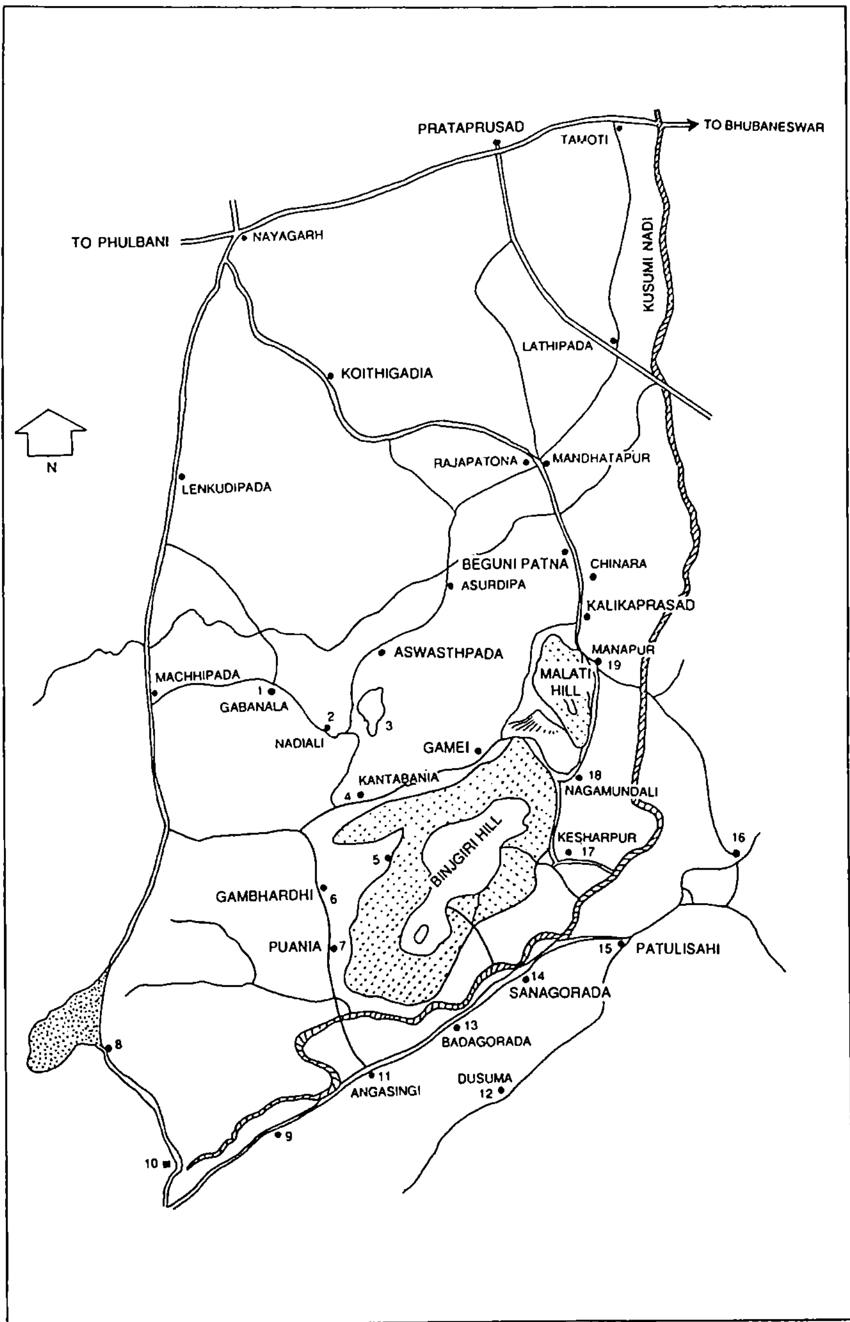


TABLE 2.1

Category Wise List of Villages

Villages which are managing Binjgiri Forest as CPR	Villages which are managing Forest area in their vicinity as CPR & restraining themselves from Binjgiri	Villages which do not have Forest area & restraining themselves from Binjgiri
1. Kesharpur	1. Manapur	1. Kantabania
2. Nagamundali	2. Kalikaprasad	2. Hingolagadia
3. Binjgiri	3. Dusuma	3. Ashurdhipa
4. Gamei	4. Gambhardhi	4. Adacher
5. Puania	5. Nadiali	5. Dimisar
6. Badagorada	6. Chinara	6. Patulisahi
7. Sanagorada	7. Aswasthapada	
8. Angasingi	8. Begunipatna	

TABLE 2.2

Demographic Data

S.No.	Village	No of House-holds	Population	% of S.C.	Main Caste
1.	Kesharpur	132	633	11	Khandait
2.	Nagamundali	137	796	3	Khandait
3.	Binjgiri	23	182	—	Khandait
4.	Gamei	189	1034	4	Khandait
5.	Badagorada	213	1281	1	Khandait
6.	Puania	95	543	22	—
7.	Sanagorada	123	689	19	—
8.	Angasingi	205	1184	12	Khandait

BOJBP is playing a role of a catalytic agent in forest management. The organisation is based on Gandhian Philosophy and is using Gandhian Tools e.g. padayatra, fast and satyagraha for averting threats to the forests. Some specific cases are given in Annexure I.

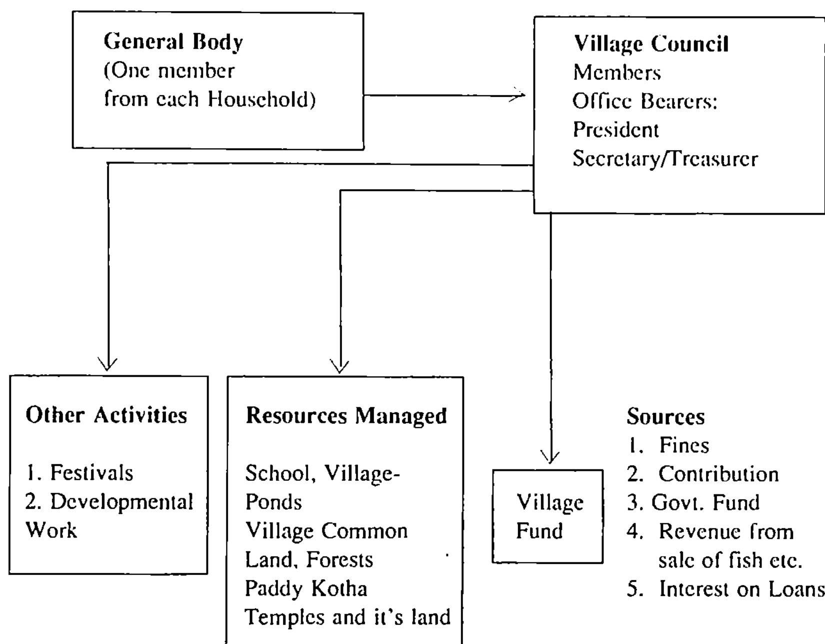
At present BOJBP is working in 255 villages through its 13 sister organisations. Approximately 39,000 acres of forest area is being managed as CPR in these 255 villages.

2.2 Village Organisations Responsible for Forest Management

All the 22 villages have traditional informal village councils which have been managing a number of other village resources. The organisational structure of informal village council is almost the same in all the villages (Figure 2.1).

FIGURE 2.1

Traditional Informal Village Council — An Overview



The number of members in the village councils varies from 5 to 10. The office bearers are president, secretary and treasurer. Some villages have all the three (Gamei), in some cases only two—president and secretary (Binjgiri, Nagamundali etc.) and in some case only president (Kantabania, Hingolgadia etc.), hold office.

The office bearers are selected by the General Body which comprises of one member from each household. There is no reservation for any category. The members are not elected but selected by consensus (except in the case of Kesharpur). Generally, the tenure is not fixed (Kantabania, Kalikaprasad etc). In a few cases the tenure is one year (Gamei, Angasingi, Puania). In Kesharpur, the villagers have evolved an innovative system of annual elections to reduce the possibility of nepotism. In this system there are no candidates for any post. All men above 18 years of age cast their vote by secret ballot bearing names of five persons on it. The five persons, whose names occur the maximum number of times are requested to become the office bearers.

Any office bearer can be removed from his post as and when the villagers loose their faith in him. The meetings of the council are organised regularly. General

body meetings of the village are held as and when considered necessary. Except in few villages (Angasingi and Binjgiri) minutes of meetings are not recorded. The progress in implementation of the decisions is reviewed at the next meeting. All the councils maintain accounts. The details of expenditures and receipts are presented to the General Body at least once in a year. Normally the money collected or received is kept with treasurer, president or secretary as the case may be. In a few cases the village fund is kept in Post Office savings account (i.e. Binjgiri and Chinara).

2.3 Management of Other Common Property Resources

The informal village councils have been traditionally managing—Village school(s), Temple, Village Land, Village Ponds etc., as common resources.

As per the provision of Orissa Government, Primary, Upper Primary and Middle Education schools are established by the villagers through their contribution in the form of money and labour. The government grant is sanctioned in a phased manner. Even after the grant, in some cases government money is not sufficient for maintenance, so the village councils continue managing the schools fully or partially.

Almost all the villages have waterponds. The ponds are managed by the village council. They are mainly used for bathing and, more significantly, for pisciculture. In two villages the water is used for irrigation. The village council manages the pisciculture in the ponds. It pays the fees to panchayat (for obtaining the rights to practice pisciculture in the ponds) from the village fund and arranges for seed collection, distribution and sale of fish.

Village common land is cultivated by the village council on share cropping basis. The village council selects the person for this purpose and decides the share. The village share goes to the village fund.

In some villages the system of Paddy loan is present. Initially every villager contributed some paddy to the Paddy Kotha (grain bank). The produce from the village common land also contributes to this. Paddy from the Kotha, can be given to the needy persons as loan. The rate of interest ranges from 20-33%. In case of emergency, the entire stock of paddy in the Kotha is sold (Nagamundali village sold the grain for construction of a school).

In some villages, the village temple and its land is also managed by the village council. Religious functions are also organised by the village council.

Now the government funds for developmental works have also started reaching the village council through the Gram Panchayat. In some cases, voluntary labour

for these works is contributed by villagers and the corresponding money goes to the village fund. Councils have restricted themselves to developmental works with a high degree of publicness e.g. road maintenance, school maintenance etc.

2.4 Forest Management System

The existence of informal Village Councils and their prior experience in management of other village resources i.e Schools, Village Land, Village Ponds etc. provide a strong base for inclusion of management of forest resources also in their sphere of activities. Scarcity of forest produce (especially fuelwood), high risk of loss in soil fertility from soil erosion, siltation of water ponds and drying up of streams provided favourable atmosphere for community forest protection and management. Probability of reasonably uniform distribution of benefits, mutual trust in each other and social leaders, common expectations of people and emotional and spiritual appeal to the people using Gandhian tools such as padayatras, fasting for a cause and satyagraha, are responsible for sustenance of the evolved forest management system.

The eight villages protecting Binjgiri have only a rough idea about their respective portions in the Binjgiri hill. There are no clear demarcation lines. The village councils have framed sets of rules, defining the rights and duties of villagers. Broadly the rules are:

— The forest is to be protected by voluntary patrolling on rotational basis by the villagers, following the system of Thengapalli (Stick rotation). In 'thengapalli', the household(s) assigned the patrolling duties for the day is given the intimation of the same by the 'thenga' (wooden stick) placed at its door on the prior evening. Subsequently the thenga is passed on from household to household. The number of pallias (persons on duty) per day is determined by the village council depending on the forest area and the external pressure on the forest patch.

— Every household has to participate in thengapalli. In case of inability to go on duty for one's turn, mutual exchanges of duty or adjustments are allowed. Refraining from the duty purposely without informing or without adequate reason invites compensatory duty on two days instead of one.

— No one can cut any tree from the forest. However in case of some emergency, village council can allow that.

— The villagers can collect dry fallen twigs, fruits, seeds, flowers and can cut some shrubs like pokasunga etc. identified by the village council, for fuelwood.

— The area is closed for grazing till natural regeneration or plantation gets established. Further in some villages rotational grazing is in practice.

— Nobody can enter the forest patch with an axe, except with prior permission.

— The villagers can collect the stones for construction from forest area for bonafide use only.

— In case of any threat to forest from outsiders, every villager is to help the Pallia on duty.

— The person who violates the rule, will be fined. The fine will be decided by village council. Normally the offender is asked to apologise publicly.

This set of ten rules is more or less common to all eight villages. During the initial years of protection, a few village councils had decided to disallow goat rearing. All the goats in a few villages were sold off. Village councils allowed goats to be kept only after vegetation was re-established. Thengapalli is generally discontinued in areas where regeneration has been established and the system of community vigilance i.e. "everybody keeping an eye over the forest and reporting any offence if seen" is followed. Even in villages which are still practising thengapalli, it is discontinued during agricultural season (Kharif).

Kesharpur has another significant special rule for the trees on river bank. It was decided by the village council that the trees on public land on the bank of river, will be looked after by the farmers owning adjacent farm lands. When the tree matures, the council takes decision to fell the tree. The wood is to be equally shared between the care-taker and the village. The care-taker has full rights over fruits and flowers from these trees.

2.5 Support to the System

The management of forest resources by the local community represents a radical departure from traditions of State forest management. There seems to be substantial doubts among some of the forest officers about the success of such a management system. Various forest officials have, however, cooperated with the villagers at various occasions.

Shri Pratap Patnaik, Divisional Forest Officer Nayagarh, participated in an NSS camp in 1976, held at Kesharpur and called for preservation of forests through community. Mr. S.C. Das, Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF), arranged for plantation on a barren area of Kesharpur in 1979. He also visited some villages around the hill in 1981 and received warm affection of villagers. He also helped Mr. Joginath Sahu to get quarrying stopped on Malati hill. In 1983, Shri P. Mahapatra (CCF) visited seven villages in the area.

After the initiation of the Social Forestry project there has been close interaction with Social Forestry personnel also. Forty-four ha. area of Binjgiri has been

planted with the help of Social Forestry wing. Interaction with other government officials—Sub-Divisional Magistrate and District Magistrate has helped in stopping the quarrying. The National Social Service organisation has also played a vital role as an external facilitating agent. A number of NSS camps in the year 1978, 1979 and 1982 have been organised. Plantation on barren hill areas with the help of college students and environmental awareness campaign formed a major part of these NSS camps.

The support by BOJBP has been most crucial for this forest protection movement. Brikshya O' Jeevar Bandhu Parishad as an umbrella organisation plays a catalytic as well as stabilising role in the promotion and sustenance of forest protection movement which has become a green satyagraha movement. At times of conflict either within or between villages, BOJBP mediates and tries to resolve these through emotional appeal, tolerance and understanding. It discourages monetary fines or coercion. BOJBP promotes local arbitration at community level instead of external intervention to resolve conflicts.

2.6 Outcomes

Three critical insights have been realised. The villagers realise that they have an important role to play in the protection and management of forests. The villagers and a few foresters understand that it is almost impossible for the government to effectively manage the forest resources in isolation. The villagers realise that because of their high stake in continued existence of forests means, they cannot evade the responsibility of ensuring the same.

In the area, the emphasis has been on spreading tree consciousness rather than physical plantations. It manifests itself in significant ways. Kesharpur is extremely green with a large number of trees present. Even small children give detailed account of the number of trees they have planted. In this area, there have been cases for demand of seedlings in dowry and plantation of trees as a part of death ceremonies instead of feeding brahmins.

In the slogans used by BOJBP, trees have been linked with sustenance of life itself:

"Trees are our life's wealth
They generate soil, water & wind
We shall not survive without trees
We draw our sustenance from trees"

For the future, the villagers in this area do not talk about cutting the trees. The maximum they can think of is using the lops or wind fallen trees. Forest protection and regeneration of forest in this area has become an end in itself instead of being

merely the means for economic gain or for fulfilling the needs for forest produce. Forests have been placed above petty factionalism. Disputes in the villages in the area have not led to either destruction of the forests or splitting of forests between caste groups or factions.

2.6.1 Production system

To the villagers production of pole and timber which requires a long gestation period seems of less immediate relevance. What does seem to be important is the rapid increase in production of fuel, either in form of fuelwood or leaves, and fodder. At the time when protection of Binjgiri was initiated, production from Binjgiri hill forest was almost zero. Digging out of roots had started. With protection of forest by villagers, the trend has reversed.

Soon after initiation of protection, production of grass increased tremendously. The availability of fodder satisfied one of the prime needs of the villagers. In Kesharpur once the village became free of its goat population following a decision by the village council to sell off all goats, a large number of babul (Acacia nilotica) trees came up particularly on the foothill and banks of ponds and river. These are used for agricultural implements, fencing material and as fuel.

Availability of fuel sources like leaves, twigs and non-timber plants i.e. pokasunga have increased and villagers can collect these freely. The school children run to the hill during the recess and feast on the nuts like—Gua-koli, Vonicha-koli, Khini-koli and Kantei-koli. Selling these nuts/berries also provide some poor Harijan women with an additional source of income. Ripe bela, tubers (panialu), leafy vegetables (Adanga), other vegetables like Kankada, Asadua and Bamboo shoots are collected by the people for self consumption. Trees are not felled unless there is an emergency like funerals or damage to somebody's house (due to fire, storms etc.).

With vegetation, wild life has come back to the forest. Bears, rabbits, monkeys, storks, pythons and some birds are now present in the forest area.

In addition to forest produce villagers perceive a number of other benefits accruing from their efforts to regenerate the forest. These include the prevention of soil erosion, increase in soil fertility, rising water levels in the area and increase in rainfall. A number of streams, which flowed only during the rains, now have water in winters too. The stream in Kesharpur which had dried up earlier now flows for nearly four months after the rains have ceased. While some of these changes may not be quantitatively verifiable, these perceived benefits have strengthened the villagers' commitment to forest protection.

2.6.2 *Equity*

At present there is no large scale production of either timber or fuel wood, so no question of equity in distribution arises. All residents of villages protecting the forest have equal access to the forest and rights to collect dried twigs, leaves or non-timber trees. The collection of leaves, twigs etc. is a time consuming process, and gathering is mainly practiced by the poor people. The rich generally have trees on their farmland and sufficient agricultural residue to use as fuel. Otherwise they purchase fuelwood. Hence, it seems that relative gain from production system of forest is more to the poorer section. But the improvement in the water regime and agricultural productivity is, however more beneficial to the farmers having large land holdings. The increased fish production due to good water supply and reduced siltation in the ponds is distributed equally among all villagers.

The relative cost of protection is higher for the poor. In 'thengapalli' system, the poor section especially the households depending predominantly on labour, stand to suffer more. Their turn for forest protection, for example, in many cases means going hungry for that household that day (because of their hand to mouth living). While for the well-off, sending one of their many hired labourers serves the purpose. So the relative opportunity cost of the day's labour is more for the labour class.

If the issue of equity is raised in terms of the inter-village distribution; the area managed by eight villages is not in proportion of their populations and even some villages which are at the same distance as these eight villages, do not have any share in Binjgiri. The situation becomes worse when a village does not have any other forest area (Patulisahi). Even though equity might not be present, it remains clear that local tradition "survives" in some form. It is the strength of local systems, their familiarity, their roots in tradition, but not equity or efficiency, that are sustaining these systems.

2.6.3 *Sustainability*

Increasing population pressure and ambiguous legal status of Protected Forests are major threats to the sustainability of forests in this area. It is only through community based management systems that sustainability of the forests can be ensured. The ecological sustainability of the regenerating forests will most likely be determined by the viability and sustainability of the organisations managing forests. Since BOJBP is playing a major role, the sustenance of the nature of BOJBP i.e. local level functioning, non profit, low profile, dominated by local people, total identification with the local populace, etc. is critical for the sustainability of the management system.

At present, people have faith in BOJBP and their general feeling is that the organisation is working for common interest. Once people lose faith in BOJBP,

the whole system may collapse. Another factor which may affect sustainability is the possible non-availability of leaders of Mr. Joginath Sahu's credence and devotion in future. An organisation like BOJBP cannot work without strong leadership.

A possible source of threat to the sustainability of the community management system could be authoritative interference of the Forest or Revenue Department.

The sustainability can be enhanced by providing processing and marketing facilities for non wood forest products (NWFP) particularly medicinal plants.

Notes

Some striking features of the forest protection movement in the area which need to be reiterated are:

— Strong stabilising and facilitative role played by BOJBP, which is functioning as an umbrella organisation. In this case, the organisation BOJBP (Friends of Trees and Living Beings) was an outcome of a felt need to formalise forest protection efforts initiated by a few individuals which had become a mass movement.

— Extreme tree consciousness generated in the area, emphasis on environmental benefits of forests rather than economic benefits.

— Due to high level of environmental concern, forests are placed above factionalism and village conflicts.

— The level of exploitation of forest is low due to forests being in early stages of regeneration as well as high level of environmental concern.

—' No monetary fines or other coercive measures are used to ensure forest protection. Adherence to rules is ensured through persuasion rather than coercion.

CHAPTER 3

Case Study 2: Rupabalia Reserved Forest

3.1 Background

Rupabalia Reserved Forest (RF) is in Dhenkanal district of Orissa. During the last two decades, the economic scene of Dhenkanal has undergone a substantial change—industrialisation and consequent urbanisation has led to tremendous increase in the demand for timber. This has led to large scale deforestation. The scarcity of produce generated through this large scale depletion of forests has played a vital role in initiation of forest protection and management by informal village committees. In the absence of such committees, new village organisations have evolved for the purpose. According to the Project Corporate Consultant (PCC) report, forests are being protected and managed by communities in 264 villages of Dhenkanal district (highest number among the districts of Orissa). Total area covered is estimated to be 56,500 ha. The details are given in Table 3.1.

TABLE 3.1

Details of Community Based Forest Management

Sl. No.	Title	Reserve forests	Other Forests (Protected/ Khesra Forest)	Total
1.	Total Area (Ha.)	2,57,600	2,37,621	4,95,221
2.	No. of committees (Managing the forest)	44	220	264
3.	a. Forest area managed by Committees (Ha.)	12,000	44,500	56,500
	b. Percentage of Total Area	4.79	18.7	11.4

Rupabalia (RF) is located near Joranda town at a distance of approximately 24 km north east of Dhenkanal district headquarter. The hillock is surrounded by villages —Atinda, Mahapada, Vejibolua (hamlet of Mahapada), Nathua, Chattia, Birikhunti, Bhatkatni, Barahota (hamlet of Bhatkatni), Joranda, Natima and Banasingh.

Prior to independence the area was under the princely state of Dhenkanal. The demarcation of Rupabalia hill was completed in 1933. Due to non availability of

records of declaration of this hill as Reserved Forest. Government of Orissa declared it as Reserved Forest (Class B) in 1959. The total area of the hill is 930 ha.

The Rupabalia RF contains two types of forests—mixed forests on hill tops and upper slopes and Sal Forests on lower slopes and foothills. The common species of mixed forests are Bombax ceiba, Cassia fistula, Anogeisus latifolia, Syzygium cumuni, Emblica officinalis, Bridelia retusa. The associates of Sal are—Terminalia belerica, Terminalia chebula, Madhuca indica, Diospyrus melanoxylon, Adina cordifolia etc.

Local tenants enjoy the priveleges and concessions in accordance with Dhenkanal and Hindol Forest Rules and Durbar Declaration of 1939. Scientific management of forests of Dhenkanal ex-state was initiated by working plan of Dr. H.F. Mooney from 1929. The Rupabalia (RF) compartment was put under Standard with Coppice working circle. The management system prescribed was a complete failure. The new working plan (1978-98) admits "The following blocks probably did not contain good forest growth with adequate coppice vigour and contained steep hills which could have been excluded from coppice working...Rupabalia....The hilly areas including steep slopes which had been allotted to coppice working circle have been completely devastated and probably the adoption of this faulty system of management is primarily responsible for this calamity which could have been averted".

In the latest working plan, Rupabalia has been put under—"Rehabilitation and plantation working circle". Rehabilitation of Sal area by undertaking cultural operations and protection from grazing by trenching and artificial regeneration in miscellaneous areas have been suggested. 172 ha. of area was treated upto 1981–82. No treatment has been done after 1982, most probably due to protection of the area by people themselves.

The initiation process of forest protection in this area could not be ascertained clearly. It seems forest protection, started spontaneously in some villages in the area and spread to other villages. Initially only Khesra/Protected Forests were protected but later the protection was extended to Reserved forests also. In the early eighties, a workshop was organised at Nathua village on forest protection by Professor Radhamohan in collaboration with People's Institute of Participatory Action and Research (PIPAR). This workshop had a major impact on the villagers of the nearby villages resulting in some more villages taking up forest management.

Out of eleven villages on the periphery of Rupabalia RF, eight villages i.e. Atinda, Mahapada, Vejibolua, Nathua, Chattia, Birikhunti, Bhatkatni and Barahota have divided the total area among themselves and are thus managing the whole Rupabalia RF. Some of these villages are also managing Khesra forest. Forest patches

managed by villages are shown in Map 2. The rough estimate of forest area is given in Table 3.2.

TABLE 3.2

Area of Forests Managed by Communities

Name of village	Area of Forests being managed by communities (in ha.)	
	Part of Rupabalia RF	Khesra Forest
Atinda	100	300
Mahapada	125	—
Vejibolua	70	—
Nathua	200	100
Chattia	200	200
Barahota	30	—
Birikhunti	130	100
Bhatkatni	70	—

The demographic data of the eight villages is given in Table 3.3. The population varies from 160 to about 1100. In three villages—Chattia, Barahota and Bhatkatni SC/ST are the main castes while the other five villages are more hetrogeneous with other castes being predominant in numbers. In case of villages with higher

TABLE 3.3

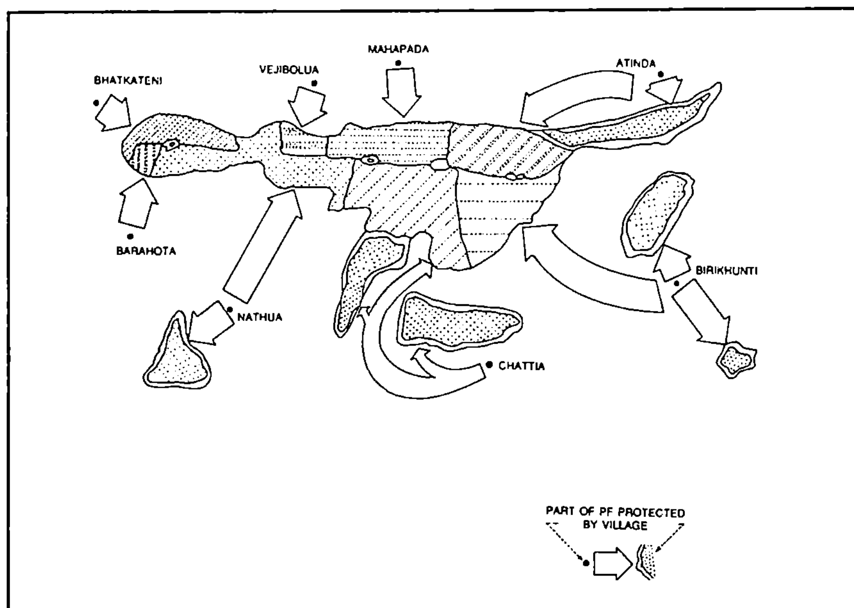
Demographic Data

S. No.	Item	Atinda	Mahapada	Birikhunti	Chattia
1.	No. of Households (1981)	127	218	176	140
2.	Population (1981)	689	1085	982	741
3.	Percentage of SC	8	11	4	9
4.	Percentage of ST	12	16	25	37
5.	Main Caste (Population wise)	Paik	Brahmin	Khandait	SC/ST
6.	Dominant Caste	Paik	Brahmin	Khandait	—

S.No.	Item	Nathua	Barahota	Bhatkatni	Vejibolua
1.	No. of Households (1991)	185	50	143	26
2.	Population (1981)	1033	300	860	160
3.	Percentage of SC	17	40	54	—
4.	Percentage of ST	12	45	12	—
5.	Main Caste (Population wise)	SC	SC/ST	SC/ST	Khandait
6.	Dominant Caste	Chasa	SC/ST	—	Khandait

population of SC/ST, there is no dominant caste while in other villages the caste of highest population enjoys a dominant position. Economically, except Mahapada and Birikhunti, in all other six villages almost the entire population is below poverty line. The majority consists of the landless who survive on agricultural labour and other means of day to day earning. Even in Mahapada and Birikhunti the percentage of such people is quite high.

Map 2: Rupabalia Reserved Forest with Villages and Territories under Management



3.2 Village Organisations Responsible for Forest Management

Generally informal village committees are responsible for forest management. In a few cases either the Sahi/Caste committee alone or the Sahi committee as well as the informal village committee are responsible for forest management. For example in Birikhunti, a sahi known as Nuasahi has a separate patch of forest which is managed by Nuasahi Committee while another patch of forest is managed by the informal villages committee for the rest of the village. In Chattia, the village committee looks after the common village forest and the committees of Juang-sahi, Saura-sahi and higher castes, look after their individual patches. The informal village committee of Mahapada has become defunct after a series of conflicts and at present four independent sahi committees are managing their individual patches of forest.

Generally the informal village committee and sahi committee manage common resources like the village ponds, temple, village common agricultural land and schools, but Vejibolua, a hamlet of Mahapada formed a forest protection committee in 1972 exclusively for the management of the forest. Now this committee is also taking up other developmental activities.

In case of Birikhunti, Chattia and Nathua, the informal village committees have been merged with the village development committees to avoid the duplication of committees.

The structure of informal village committee which consists of a general body, an executive body and office bearers, is more or less same as in Case Study 1. The general body consists of the head of each household. This naturally excludes women's representation altogether.

In some committees, the executive body is selected by the general body and the office bearers—president, secretary and treasurer are selected by members of the executive body (Atinda) while in others the executive body as well as the office bearers are selected by the general body (Bhatkatni, Birikhunti). In case of Chattia, representation of each sahi is ensured in the executive body. In case of the Village Development Committee, the selection is held in the presence of Block Development Officer (BDO).

The sahis are generally caste homogeneous, though sometimes a few families of different castes may also stay in a sahi, and participate in the sahi committee. The structure of sahi committees is quite flexible. The number of executive members can vary in few cases (Chattia). Normally the office bearers belong to dominant caste in sahi except in Bhatkatni where the secretary of Saura-sahi is a Brahmin. He has been selected by the general body due to his writing and reading capabilities. Sahi committees function in a much more informal manner as compared to village committees.

The tenure of committees is normally not fixed except Nathua (3 years) and Bhatkatni (one year). The executive body and office bearers can be changed by the general body.

The structure of the forest protection committee of Vejibolua is also the same (general body—head of each household, executive body—four members, and five office bearers). The tenure is one year.

Meetings of the committee are normally arranged as per the requirements except in Vejibolua, where the provision is for monthly meetings. Working of village committees and informal forest protection committees are more systematic than sahi committees. Normally the minutes of the meetings of village committees are recorded and signed by the members present. Every committee has some fund

under its control. Money is kept with the secretary or the treasurer except in Atinda where it is kept in the bank. The records of accounts are kept by the secretary or the treasurer. All accounts are normally open to villagers and are presented at the annual general body meeting.

Working of (informal) forest protection committee of Vejibolua is highly systematic. Minutes of all meetings are recorded and the following records are maintained:

(a) Meeting Notice Book	Formal notice of meetings is circulated to all members. The notice contains the agenda items. All members have to sign on the notice.
(b) Minutes of Meeting Register	Minutes of the meetings are recorded by the secretary and signed by the members present in the meetings.
(c) Accounts Book	Details of all receipts and expenditures are maintained.
(d) Personal Accounts Book	Individual accounts of all the members are maintained.

In case of most other villages, only minutes of the meeting register and accounts book are maintained.

Forest protection committees have also been formed in some of the villages by the forest department as per the government resolution of 1988. As per the information available, Rupabalia RF has been allotted to ten villages and forest protection committees have been formed in all these villages. All revenue villages except Chattia which are managing Rupabalia for the last few years have been included in these ten villages. In addition, five other villages have also been included. Some of these, which have been assigned the responsibility of protection of Rupabalia RF, are not even near the forest area. In general these committees are defunct. Except Nathua and Birikhunti, people are not even aware of the existence of such a committee. In the case of Birikhunti one member is common to the formal and the informal committee, so he claims that every decision is taken by the formal committee. In the case of Nathua, the sarpanch belongs to the village and is the head of the informal village committee as well as of the formal forest protection committee, thus in a way the formal committee is also functioning.

3.3 Forest Management System

The conditions which encouraged community management of the forests are:

— high scarcity of fuelwood and construction material,

— almost uniform dependence of all sections of the society on forests for fuelwood and construction material,

— probability of uniform distribution of material benefits,

— mutual trust in each other,

— common expectations of the people,

— the impact of awareness camps.

Even though the forest area (Rupabalia R.F.) is a class B Reserved Forest for which strict prohibitory rules exist, yet people have framed their own rules for forest use regulation. All committees have framed their own rules relating to:

— the composition of the committee and duties of office bearers,

— functions and duties of the committees,

— duties of villagers for protection, extraction and distribution of products,

— conflict resolution,

— and penalties for defaulters.

The system of resource use is based on the sense of reasonably balanced sharing or reciprocity. All members of the community have relatively equal access to the resource calculated according to the needs and the supply from the existing forest. Each individual is assured that no one else can free ride on his expense, i.e. no other person can have an undue share at the expense of others' share. The penalty system provides strong disincentives for using forest resources in a manner not sanctioned by the community.

The rules have evolved and changed over time. Even though each committee has its own set of rules but guiding factors for all of them are the same. These rules that enable people to act collectively form the basis of local forest management systems. The set of rules of Vejibolua hamlet are given in Box A.

BOX A

Forest Rules of Vejibolua

The forest protection committee of Vejibolua first framed their rules in 1972 itself, but due to loss of rule register, the committee framed the rules in 1982 again. Broadly these rules can be grouped in two categories:

A. Rules related to the composition and functioning of the forest protection committee:

1. Any member (household) of the village can become a member of the committee.
2. Management of the forest will be looked after by an Executive Body which will have four members and five office bearers viz. President, Vice President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Treasurer.
3. The office bearers and members of Executive Body shall be selected by consensus. Duties of office bearers are as follows:

President	All forestry related works shall be carried out under the direction of the president.
Vice President	In the absence of the president all his duties will be looked after by the Vice President.
Secretary	All the documents related to the forest shall be kept by the secretary. The secretary shall be responsible if any harm occurs to the documents. He will present every month's accounts in the last meeting of the month. The annual accounts shall be presented in the last meeting of the year.
Deputy Secretary	He will look after the secretary's responsibilities in his absence.
Treasurer	He will collect the royalty of forest produce from members within a fixed period of time and will maintain the accounts.
Executive Body	All forestry operations will be carried out as per the directions of the executive body. It shall inspect the works and suggest improvements if required. It shall also initiate necessary action against the defaulters.

B. Rules related to forest management:

1. The members (only) will have equal rights on the forest. If any outsider wants some produce from forest, the office bearers can give permission for the same.

2. Each member will protect the forest on the days allotted to him. If any member fails to do so, he will be required to compensate for that day by two days of patrolling duty.

3. On receiving information regarding theft in the forest, the Palia (the man who is supposed to be on patrolling duty on that day) has to go to forest. If he does not do so without adequate reason, he will be required to give Re. 1/- as fine and will have to apologise in front of all the members.

4. A member can go to the forest for collection of material allotted to him only after paying the money as per the scheduled rates to the concerned office-bearer. If somebody violates this rule he will have to forfeit the material along with a fine of Rs. 2/-.

5. Each member is entitled to equal amount of material from the forest. If somebody requires more material then he will have to take the permission from the committee and will have to pay twice the scheduled rates.

6. If any one wants to give his share to another person he can do so at double the rate and after taking the committee's consent.

7. Forest produce can be collected only from the area decided by the committee. If someone collects from any other area, he would have to pay a fine of Rs. 2/-.

8. No one can sell any forest produce from the protected patch of forest to any outsider.

Since the relationship between the society and the forest resources is dynamic, it is necessary to amend the rules governing the relationship, as per the changes in condition of the resource and the requirements of the user group. The committee has been amending rules as per need. The dynamics of rules over the period 1982-1990 is given in Box B.

BOX B

Dynamics of Vejibolua Rules

No.	Date		Rule
1.	27.12.83	(a)	Two persons will go for patrolling duty to the forest.
		(b)	Any person who owes money to the committee will forfeit his rights to the forest produce.
2.	9.1.84	(a)	All members should attend general body meeting. Absentees will have to pay Re. 1/- fine.
		(b)	The secretary should be informed before collecting wood from the forest.
3.	24.4.84	(a)	Rule No. 5 of first rules (6.4.82) is amended. If some member requires more material than his quota, he has to pay thrice the cost instead of twice.
		(c)	While members are taking out dry wood the members on duty (Palia) shall count the bundles and report to office bearers.
4.	25.4.85		The members who resign voluntarily from the committee will not be allowed to become a member in future.
5.	2.6.85		Felling of trees outside the forest area being protected is also prohibited. Same rules shall be applicable as for the patch being protected.
6.	2.7.85		If somebody does not pay the fine, he'll be excluded from the forest benefits. If anybody tries to use force for getting forest produce, strict action will be taken against him. If any one helps that person, he will be fined double of the accused.
7.	14.9.85		The treasurer can give money kept with him as loan to the members.
8.	30.3.87		Persons who enter in the forest without permission will pay Rs. 2 as fine plus value of the wood taken.
9	3.4.87	(a)	If any one remains absent from three consecutive meetings, he will be removed from the committee.
		(b)	If anybody uses the material without getting it checked, he will have to pay a fine equivalent to double the scheduled rate of the produce.

No.	Date		Rule
		(c)	Anything which has been brought from outside the forest, will be treated as belonging to protected patch of forest and the person will be punished accordingly.,
		(d)	Nobody will leave the meeting place without adequate reason before the conclusion of the meeting. If anybody does so he will have to pay a fine of Rs. 5.
10.	19.4.88	(a)	If anybody is in knowledge of any violation of rules and does not reveal it, on getting the proof of it, he will have to pay a fine equivalent to five times the fine of the culprit.
		(b)	Fine on leaving the meeting without permission is reduced to Re. 1.
11.	27.4.89	(a)	Any person who fails to go on patrolling duty for a day without making alternate arrangements, shall have to pay a fine of Rs. 10 in addition to two days of duty.
		(b)	Any person who sells the material given to him, shall have to pay a fine five times the cost of the material.
		(c)	The person on patrolling duty will be required to pass on the stick to the next household who will have his duty the next day.
		(d)	All the work of the forest will be as per the direction of executive body.
		(e)	The material brought from the forest after all necessary requirements can only be used after checking of the same by president or vice president.
		(f)	Nobody can leave the meeting without permission, if some one does so, he has to pay a fine of Rs. 5.
12.	29.4.89		The material brought can not be used unless it is checked by the office bearers.
13.	17.10.89		At the time of theft from the forest, all villagers will get together. If anybody does not cooperate, he will be required to pay Rs. 5 as fine.

The forests are protected through either Thengapalli or paid watchers. In some cases, during the agricultural season (Kharif) thengapalli system is discontinued.

The extraction of forest produce is regulated:

By type and quantity: Only identified products and their fixed quantities can be taken out. Normally there is no restriction on taking out non wood forest produce (NWFP) and fallen and dried wood. Only fixed quantities of green wood, poles and timber are allowed to be taken out.

By area: In some villages, a particular area is fixed for collection of forest produce in any year i.e. a kind of rotation is followed.

By payment: Individuals can obtain certain produce like pole and small timber only after payment of a price fixed by the village committee.

By Time: In some villages i.e. Vejibolua, access to forest is allowed only for a few fixed days in a year.

By Agency: People can not take the help of outsiders for collection of forest produce.

In a number of cases, the community takes up important operations like cleaning, coppicing etc. This is mostly done voluntarily and the cleaning material is used for fuelwood as well as poles.

3.4 Conflict Resolution and Support to the System

In case of community management of resources especially resources involving high stake for all sections of society, conflicts become inevitable. The sustainability of community management systems, to a large extent depends on the capability of village organisations to reduce the chances of occurrence of such conflicts and resolve them in case they do arise.

A number of cases of conflict have been reported in this area. In Mahapada village conflict arose due to perception of unequal and favoured distribution of benefits to different castes. The non-brahmins allege that the brahmins used to violate the rules and cut trees, and shrug off the responsibility of forest protection. It was resolved by division of the forest patch and transfer of management to caste committees.

There was major conflict between Kendupada and Atinda over the latter's protected forest patch. The residents of Kendupada village tried to cut and take away Sal trees being protected by Atinda village. The resulting fight left one person dead and several injured. The conflict could be resolved only after intervention by government officials and PIPAR.

In Vejibolua, two villagers felled some trees against the rules and challenged the authority of the committee to punish them. These two persons also complained to the police. The Assistant Sub-Inspector of Joranda police station informally arbitrated this matter and gave his verdict in favour of the committee. In another case, few trees were cut by residents of a nearby village who refused to pay the fine on being caught. The issue was resolved by inviting a reputed person of that village along with the offenders to a village committee meeting. The verdict of the special invitee was accepted by both the parties.

In a number of cases conflicts have been resolved by the communities through their own innovative approaches. The forest and police officials have also been supporting the system in cases of conflicts. In a few cases, however, conflicts could not be resolved. In Joranda, a large patch of Sal forest was cut overnight due to internal conflicts which could not be resolved. At present this village has no forest.

Forest officers have also indirectly supported the system by not disturbing it even though it is a reserved forest area subject to strict rules under the Indian Forest Act. The Joranda based voluntary organisation PIPAR has also helped the system in situations of major crisis and provided encouragement to the villagers.

3.5 Outcomes

3.5.1 Production system:

The regeneration of forests has ameliorated the fuelwood situation in the villages. Earlier the villagers used to obtain fuelwood from the Kapilash Reserved Forest. More than two to three days were spent in getting a cart load of wood. The cost was working out to be Rs. 100-120 per cart load. Now, except Bhatkateni and Barahota (which have smaller patches with younger regeneration), in other villages each household gets two to three cartloads of fuelwood through cleaning of forest patches every year at a very nominal cost of Rs. 2-5 per cartload. Taking out dry wood as headloads is also allowed in most of the villages.

Production of non wood products has also increased significantly. Fruits like Bel, Aonla, Baheda are available in good quantity. The tribals, especially the Juangs gather tubers, stems and leaves of various plants from the forest for food. Forests are an important source of food for them in the scarcity period of summers and a supplementary source throughout the year.

The regeneration of forests has also led to increased employment opportunity for the poor. According to the tribals of Chattia village, they get full employment for 45 days in Kendu leaf season and 15 days in Sal seed season, earning Rs. 15-20 per day. Opportunities of leaf plate and chatai (mat) making also provide partial employment for about six months to tribal women and children.

In addition to fuelwood and non wood products, poles are also available to the people of Nathua, Vejibolua, Birikhunti and Chattia. Poles are given for house construction from protected forests at nominal cost. Generally timber is not harvested except either for some common purpose such as use in the village school, the temple, festivals, or in emergency situations (burning down of houses), etc.

The returns from forest management are substantially good except for the first few years. Given the low investment costs for re-establishing the productivity of degraded forest with root stock present, the system seems to be highly productive with considerable potential for increasing employment and income generating opportunities.

3.5.2 *Equity*

In almost all the villages covered, the harvested forest produce is distributed equally. In most cases, there is no restriction on collection of fuelwood (dry and fallen) by headloads and NWFP collection. Hence, it seems that relative gain from forest management is more to the poorer section (SC and ST especially). However, the relative costs are also more for this section due to the reasons discussed already in the Binjgiri case.

Resentment amongst the lower classes due to their high opportunity cost does not exist in cases where forest management is being done on caste/hamlet basis (Sahi-basis). However, in cases of village management of forests, where the higher castes are perceived to gain more benefit (by taking out cartloads of wood as compared to headloads taken by them), tensions have resulted. In Mahapada, this resulted in division of the common patch and management of separate patches by SC and ST respectively. Managing their own patch not only ensures them benefits from forest but gives them a chance to assert themselves.

The forest management has also led to empowerment of the poor to some extent. It provides an issue on which the poorer people can come together on a common platform.

Forest management by community is a gain-gain situation where all the sections of society stand to benefit. Hence, community action on forest related problems becomes easier. Even if equity is not achieved in real terms, equal access to benefits and some benefits to all the sections of the society contribute to sustainability of the system.

The issue of equity must also be raised in terms of the inter-village equity. A number of villages which are on the periphery of the Rupabalia forest do not have the opportunity to manage the forest and hence do not have any share in the production. Within the villages, which are managing the forest, the per capita

forest area varies from .08 ha to .58 ha. However equal distribution of benefits from forests may not be necessary, if past forest dependency levels and family needs vary. Any attempt to change the existing system may even lead to destruction of the whole system. So any effort to develop distributive mechanisms which correspond to equity objectives should be carefully designed.

3.5.3 *Sustainability*

The sustainability of the management of forests as CPR can be looked at from two aspects—sustainability of the physical resource and sustainability of community management system. The sustainability of the physical resource is assured with the present usage pattern under the community management system. However the sustainability of this kind of community management system itself poses certain questions.

The system of community management of forests has evolved out of a perceived necessity for the same. Sustenance of this system depends on a number of factors and their interplay. Some of these factors which need to be discussed are:

Pressure from the non-user group

In the process of villages taking up forest management, the early starters i.e. those villages which perceived the need to manage forests earlier than others, took up larger patches of forests, while other villages in the neighbourhood were left with little area or no area at all. This imbalance tends to lead to pressure from the excluded group, and the villagers managing the forest patches may not be able to prevent outsiders coming and exploiting the forest by force (As actually happened in the case of Atinda and Kendupada villages).

This pressure is bound to grow once the trees, mainly Sal, become older. Also Kapilash RF which is the source of timber and fuelwood to all the villages in the area, has been recently closed by the forest department. This will again lead to tremendous pressure on the protected patches of forests.

Social Cohesion

For effective community management, it is essential to have a unified community. Factions develop mainly on castelines or within the dominant castes. Factionalism was seen to lead to either destruction of forests as in case of Joranda (where 20 hectares of good sal forest was cut due to infighting) or to division of forest amongst factions as in Mahapada. Factionalism has strong linkages with perceived inequity, as in the case of Mahapada, where the SC and ST population insisted on division of the village forest between the various caste groups in the village on feeling that the Brahmins were taking a major share of the benefits from the forest.

Scarcity/Availability of Forest Products

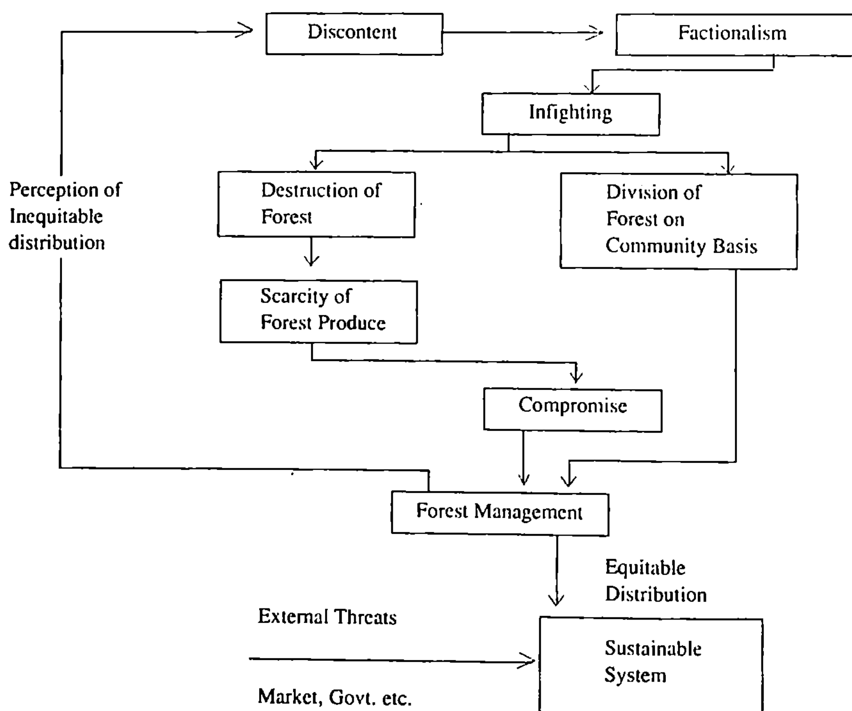
The major driving force leading to community protection of forests is the increasing scarcity of forest produce leading to an urge to act. However, too acute a scarcity might put tremendous pressure on the protected patches. Till now, alternate source of fuelwood and timber existed in the form of Kapilash RF. However with its closure, pressure on protected patches both from within the protecting villages and outside would increase.

Pressure may also build up, in cases, where a large population shares a small forest patch i.e. where per capita forest is very low. In Joranda village, this was pointed out as the reason for destruction of their forest.

Thus scarcity to a certain limit is conducive to committees undertaking forest protection. While in conditions of acute scarcity and abundance of forest resource, the former threatens the sustainability of CPRM system for forest and in the latter situation, the necessity to manage the resource is not felt.

FIGURE 3.1

Equity and Sustainability of the System



Forest Type and Quality

As the trees, especially Sal, in the forest patches become older and more valuable, the temptation to cut them increases, both for the members of the user group and the outsiders. A cyclic process of protection and sudden cutting of the entire forest patch (when the trees became marketable) was cited for Vejibolua village by a retired ACF, a resident of the village.

Market Pressure

As forest products especially timber and fuelwood become more scarce, their money value increases and the market forces offer a strong temptation (The Atinda Village's forest patch, comprising of Sal timber, would be worth crores at existing prices). This is the greatest threat to such older protected patches of Sal. This on the other hand, can become a strong motivating force once a share in timber sales proceeds is ascertained.

Government Intervention

Any government intervention, unless well designed and implemented properly may upset the fragile equilibrium within and among the villages.

Notes

The salient features of forest management efforts in this area are:

— The primary consideration leading to forest management has been economic i.e. a perceived decline in availability of forest produce.

— Absence of a strong umbrella organisation having strong community base, leading to lack of communication, cooperation and networking among villages, has, to some extent, contributed to informal village level bodies evolving into independent strong structures.

— Environmental consciousness is relatively low. The forest management efforts do not have a strong ideological basis. Forests are seen as means for economic gain. Hence conflicts over forests occur quite often, sometimes leading to destruction or division of forests.

— An elaborate system of rules and sanctions for regulating the use of protected patches of forests has evolved. Coercive measures like monetary fines and physical punishment are used to discourage free riding.

CHAPTER 4

Forest Protection in Phulbani District

Forest protection in the cases from Puri and Dhenkanal district, has primarily been a result of acute scarcity of forest resource. The situation in some forest abundant parts of Phulbani is different, with scarcity not being the dominant causal factor.

Phulbani district is rich in forest resources. The total forest area is 6474 sq. km which is approximately 58% of geographical area. Out of this 54% is Protected Forest. Per capita forest area is .9 ha. The net sown area is 2480 sq. km only. Out of the total population of 7,17,280 (1981 census), 39% is tribal population. The urban population is only 5.26%. The per capita forest for rural tribal population is approximately 2.3 ha. Phulbani's economy is purely rural—agriculture and forest based.

During the study, a number of villages from two areas of Phulbani district—Sadar Block and Paburia Block, and G. Udayagiri Block were covered. These areas are predominantly tribal with Kondhs being the main tribe. Phulbani Sadar Block is a relatively forest abundant area, while in Paburia block and G. Udayagiri block, the forests have degenerated under extreme biotic pressure coupled with shifting cultivation problem.

4.1 Background

Forests play a vital role in the economy of tribal people of the area. Most of the tribals depend on forests for at least six months for their livelihood. In Phulbani Sadar block charcoal making and head loading are important livelihood sources. Tendu leaves, Sal seed, Mahua seed and Sal leaves are the common minor forest products which play a major role in the tribal economy.

Even though no documentation exists, a number of villages seem to have been protecting patches of forests for the last 10-15 years. However, 1982 was a watershed year, when a number of people's workshops on forests and environment were conducted by a voluntary agency National Institute of People's Development, Investigation and Training (NIPDIT), which provided a forum for village people

to discuss forestry issues with government officials, notably District Collector and also Professor Radhamohan as resource person. These workshops had a major impact in the form of villages deciding and taking oaths to protect patches of forests. At present, according to NIPDIT, 400 villages are protecting forests in Phulbani district. The main reasons for taking up forest protection as spelled out by villagers are:

— Increasing scarcity of wood, especially good quality timber.

— Problems in obtaining MFPs like Sal seeds, Sal leaves, Mahua flowers and seeds, Siali leaves for leaf plates etc. which play an important role in tribal economy.

— Increasing concern amongst local people as regards the future of the forests and their existence and availability for their posterity.

— Though environmental concern was given as a reason for forest protection, this seems to be the effect of extension by voluntary agencies. It is yet to be internalised and does not seem to have been the major motivating force.

Apart from the reasons offered by the villagers, another reason which seems to have played an important role in the process is the desire to change their (forest dwellers') image of forest destroyers to forest protectors. This has been more or less a fallout of the People's Workshop on Forestry Issues (1982). The issues discussed during the workshop were the state of forests in the past and at present, and who is responsible for degradation of forests. This led to self analysis and thinking on the part of villagers, once the initial spell of blaming the Forest Department was over. Also forest protection in this area stems from the desire to assert their rights over the nearby forest patches not merely for usage but also for protection.

4.2 Forest Management System

Generally in this area, villagers decide to protect only one patch of forest while they continue to draw their large demands from other nearby forest areas. The management system is simple and loose. The mechanism of forest protection and the institutional and operational arrangements involved in the process are not very elaborate. The decision to protect a patch of forest is taken by the village community as a whole, in a general meeting of the village. The lead role in this decision might be played by some prominent individuals or village organisation (Village Committees, Youth Clubs etc.). Once a community decides to protect a patch, all villages in the neighbourhood are informed of this decision (by beating of drums). The parallel between the villagers declaring a patch of forest as reserved for future, and the notification of a patch as Reserved Forest by the Forest Department is noticeable.

No system of patrolling is being adopted in these areas. The declaration itself seems to serve the purpose. In a few instances, the declaration is accompanied with a threat of curse (i.e. the community threatens that the forest offenders would contact leprosy).

No elaborate rules and regulations for use have been framed. Use regulations vary from village to village depending on the status of forest patch being looked after. In some cases, no restrictions on usage for the village members protecting the forest patch exist, while in other cases, the village completely refrains from extracting any wood out of that patch. In some cases, there is no restriction on dry and fallen wood and even outsiders are allowed to take it.

In Phulbani Sadar block, cleaning operations in the forest patch are undertaken by the communities. In forest-rich areas, most of the cleaning material, except poles is left in the forest itself or taken as fuelwood—no well defined system of distribution of cleaning material exists. While in areas of relatively high scarcity, cleaning material is distributed equally amongst all households. There is no restriction on NWFP collection.

No monetary fines are imposed as threats of forest thefts from outsiders are not pronounced in Phulbani Sadar Block. In Paburia and G. Udayagiri, in case of violation (of local forest rules) the village organisations engaged in forest protection decide the fines/sanctions to be imposed. In case of the violator being from another village generally the village committees of both the villages mutually decide on the fine/punishment.

4.3 Forest Protection by Individuals

A strange phenomenon has been observed in Phulbani district, especially in Phulbani Sadar Block i.e. individuals taking up patches of forest for protection.

In Phulbani Sadar Block, in a few villages individuals took up degraded patches of forest and declared those patches as being under their care. Such patches have now regenerated, and those individuals 'own' beautiful Sal forest patches. Generally, elderly well-respected persons in the villages have done so and this is looked upon as an altruistic act. Reasons offered by these individuals for taking up forest protection are—desire to leave a patch of forest for their future generation, to have a patch of forest going by their name, and to leave aside a forest for contingency purposes for the village. From such a forest patch, other villagers are helped whenever they are in need of wood—in such cases as some ceremonies, death or damage to the house. Some of the individuals looking after these patches seem to hope for land pattas or rights to these patches.

In G. Udayagiri and Paburia blocks, some individuals left aside their traditionally owned shifting cultivation land or Padar land (marginal upland agricultural land) to regenerate and have "individual" or "private" forest patches now.

4.4 Analysis

In a broader perspective, one of the parameters of gauging community action for forest protection/preservation should be the wood consumption pattern in these communities. The impact of communities taking to forest protection would not be substantial if it is restricted to one patch of forest in proximity, while unabated exploitation of other forest areas continues.

In Phulbani district, especially in the forest rich areas, village people are still extravagant in their consumption pattern of wood which is reflected in their profligate use of fuelwood (almost 25 kg per day per family) and use of sal poles for fencing.

Many livelihood sources in the forest abundant areas are not only forest destructive but also economic blunders. Prominent amongst these is the practice of charcoal making, a common livelihood source in Phulbani Sadar area. This leads to conversion of a mature Sal tree worth a few thousands to charcoal worth Rs. 40-50, which is sold clandestinely in Phulbani town. Added to these are instances of burning down of a tree to get at honey worth Rs. 30-60, and the more prevalent problem of headloading.

Another factor having a bearing upon forest and forest protection phenomenon is the prevalent practice of shifting cultivation. The DFO Phulbani attributes forest degradation in Phulbani Division to this one major factor. In Paburia and G. Udayagiri Blocks, there exist claims (by NGOs) of villages abandoning shifting cultivation and taking to forest protection. This was observed to be the case in some villages. However, in many other cases the villagers have stopped cultivating the patches being protected and have shifted to more interior forest areas.

In such a context, protection of patches of forest by village communities, while exploitation of other forest areas continues, in macro-perspective especially from forest administration point of view may not achieve the overall goal of forest management and sustenance. However, it is important to admit that this phenomenon of village communities coming forth to protect forests even if in small pockets is in itself a commendable achievement and a step in the right direction. This can provide a launching pad for initiation of a sustainable forest resource management system.

Part II

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

The village communities witness the receding of forests and experience the consequent problems, firsthand. It is only natural for them to be concerned. This concern was translated to action in many parts of Orissa and the process was facilitated by:

— presence of strong informal village organisations.
— ambiguous status of Protected Forests.
— and regeneration of forests being a 'gain-gain' situation (i.e. all stand to gain) for all the sections of community.

Local action on community basis became easier due to presence of traditional village committees which have been handling other community issues and assets in the past. In Orissa, one of the reasons for thriving of the traditional informal village level organisations could be the less pronounced influence of the formal panchayats at village level; this being due to a large number of villages per panchayat (average — 11.8 villages per panchayat).

In Orissa, the ambiguous status of Protected Forests also provides a highly favourable environment for evolution of community management system. The ownership of the Protected Forest lies with the revenue department and management effectively with none. In Orissa, out of 57745 sq. km of forest area, 30,094 sq. km is Protected Forest. Out of this, demarcation has been completed for 16, 087 sq. km. Only in case of a few Demarcated Protected Forests, Working Schemes have been prepared by the forest department. Thus large areas of Protected Forests have been left unmanaged. As the forest started receding further from the villages, the local communities realised that open-access usage of the resource is no longer a realistic proposition and some kind of user group regulation is required to safeguard the interests of the community. This resulted in communities undertaking protection and management of forest, starting with Protected Forests. Later Reserved Forests were also taken up for protection by communities which did not have adequate Protected Forests (PF) in their vicinity or under their control.

It is highly likely that any relatively small group that has lived for a long period in close proximity of a common resource (forest in this case) of moderate scarcity will have evolved some kind of user group organisation (UGO), if not prevented from doing so by external agencies, notably Government. These organisations display tremendous organisational and managerial capabilities in managing community resources. The speed at which they are able to organise and manage the resources will depend on the following:

- prior or concurrent experience with other local organisations that provide an easy model to emulate or the availability of general purpose UGO that may be able to diversify its activities,
- homogeneity in the community,
- uniform dependance of all sections of the community on the resource,
- physical unity of user community and user shared perception about equity,
- mutual trust,
- risk involved in continuing with other systems of management.

It may be enhanced by cultural homogeneity, local value system and presence of supporting organisations—governmental or non-governmental.

The organisations which have emerged or have diversified for managing forest resource show a high degree of variability resulting from responsiveness to the local environment and management needs.

A comparative analysis of Puri, Dhenkanal and Phulbani district (Box C) substantiates this.

In Puri district, where resource scarcity is high the User Group Organisation (UGO) is well organised. However since environmental awareness is high and tendency to free-ride is substantially reduced by the emotional and spiritual appeal by BOJBP, the use regulations and sanctions are not rigidly defined. The Gandhian philosophy of the supporting organisation—BOJBP has resulted in emphasis being on social restrictions and sanctions instead of monetary fines.

In case of Dhenkanal district, moderate resource scarcity, absence of high level emotional and spiritual attachment to forests and lack of strong grassroot level voluntary organisations' (like BOJBP) presence in the area has led to local institutions being strong and independent having elaborate use-regulations and sanctions in the form of monetary fines etc.

The case of Phulbani district presents an entirely different picture. Resource scarcity being less pronounced and pressure on forests being less than in cases of Puri and Dhenkanal, user group organisations are loosely organised. The local village organisations have not adapted/evolved extensively to cope up with the new added responsibility of forest management. No need has been felt to evolve elaborate rules and regulations. To stop the entry of people of other villages, mere

BOX C

Comparative Analysis of Forest Management Systems

	Binjgiri (District - Puri)	Rupabalia (District-Dhenkanal)	District Phulbani
1. Demography			
Population Composition	Hetrogenous Dominated by higher and other backward castes	Hetrogenous Villages mostly dominated by higher and other backward castes.	More or less homogeneous Mainly Tribals. Some Scheduled castes.
Population Density	High	High	Low
2. Forest			
Type	Mixed Forest	Sal and Mixed Forest	Mainly Sal
Legal status	Protected forest	Protected and Reserved Forest	Mainly Protected Forest
Scarcity	High	Moderate to high	Low
Distance from nearest significant forest	> 5 Km	> 10 Km	< 1 Km
3. Forest Protection/Management			
Reasons for Protection/ Management	Increasing Soil erosion and loss of fertility of fields. Acute fuelwood and timber scarcity. Environmental concern.	Scarcity of fuelwood and timber	Future concern. Assertion over forests. Decrease in good quality timber.
Village Organisations	Informal Village council	Informal Village Council, Sahi/Hamlet Committees	Informal Village Council, Youth Clubs

BOX C *(Contd.)*

	Binjgiri (District - Puri)	Rupabalia (District-Dhenkanal)	District Phulbani
Protection System	Thengapalli-Voluntary Patrolling on Rotation basis, Initially Community vigilance, later Social Pressure	Thengapalli/Paid Watcher -Fines, Seasonal and Spatial Restrictions, Social Pressure	No active protection. Community Vigilance.
Benefits Perceived	Decrease in Soil erosion. Stability of Streamflow. Fruits, nuts, twigs, leaves etc.	Mainly fuelwood and timber, NWFP to some extent	Comparatively less benefits (due to non scarcity).
4. External Support			
Support by FD	Intermittent supportive gesture	No support	No support
Role of NGOs	Extreme influence of BOJBP both in initiation and spread of forest protection	Some influence of People's Workshop in the initiation (organised by the initiative of Prof. Radhamohan supported by PIPAR)	People's workshop (by Prof. Radhamohan & NIPDIT) had tremendous impact and led to communities taking up forest protection
Coordination with other villages and Presence of Umbrella Organisation	High BOJBP acts as an umbrella organisation	Low No umbrella organisation	Non-existent Effort to promote Vikas Sangha and NIPDIT as Umbrella organisations
Miscellaneous			
Perception of people about forests	Environmental Consciousness. Emotional attachment to forests	Economic Benefits perceived. High value attached to forests	Low value attached to forests.
Wood Consumption	Low	Moderate	High. Profligate use.

public declarations of the village's intention to protect a patch of forest is considered sufficient.

The cases from Puri, Dhenkanal and Phulbani have pronounced differences as regards the physical attributes of the resources present and the institutional arrangements for managing the resource. However local community action for management of forests stands out in all the cases.

The spread of community management of forests, as well as realisation of the need to involve communities for regenerating forests led the Government of Orissa (GOO) to pass a resolution in 1988 (Annexure II). This government resolution, though recognises the need to involve local population for forest protection but does not effectively offer much. Other than bonafide consumption of wood and rights to MFP, which in practice local people already exercise (in some areas of class A Reserved Forests and all areas of class B Reserved Forests rights for bonafide-use already exist) no special rights to communities protecting forests have been given.

Also, the composition of the Forest Protection Committee (FPC) with five official members and only three non-official members makes it non-representative of the community and non-responsive to village dynamics.

Another Government resolution issued by the Government of Orissa dated 11th Dec. 1990 (Annexure: III), for 'Protection of Reserved Forests and Protected Forests by the Community and Enjoyment of certain usufructs by the community', extends the scheme to the PF also. This resolution also mentions certain 'concessions' (not rights) for RF. This resolution provides for at least three non-official members.

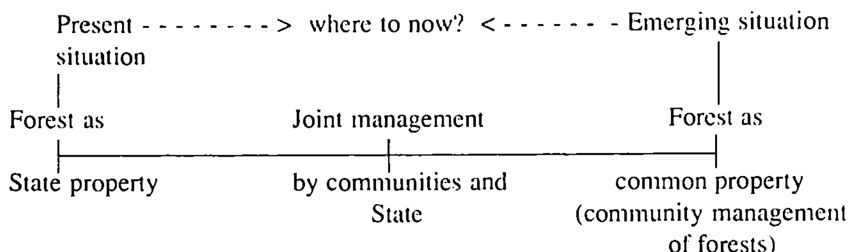
The government resolutions are a positive step no doubt, however these led to a target rush with respect to formation of forest protection committees. With pressure for formation of FPCs and in the absence of any guidelines to the forestry field staff, about 6000 FPCs have been formed in a haste. Some of these FPCs are functioning quite well but most of them seem to be inoperative. In some cases, the area being traditionally protected by village was allotted to some other village for protection. In some other cases, villages considerably away from a forest patch were allotted area while the ones in the proximity were neglected. Such events occured due to formation of FPCs on paper by field staff at Panchayat Headquarters or Range Headquarters. This is a good example of how well intentioned policy decisions are liable to lead to unforseen and undesirable results, if not implemented properly.

Key Issues

The significance of the emerging pattern of communities organising and taking up forest degradation as a community issue, is important and thought-provoking. Some key issues raised by this development are:

— Is management of forest resources by communities desirable? Should devolution of power from the State to the Local Communities to manage forests be taken up? If yes, to what extent and in which form?

— The choice of forest management system lies on a continuum ranging from strict control of forests by the State to formal handing over the forests to communities as common property resource.



— Would alternatives depend on the local situation i.e. condition of the resource and the organisational alternatives available? Is it necessary to have flexibility to experiment with, and adopt alternatives as per the need from the available range, ranging from total state control in interior forest areas to joint management or community management on interface between forests and human population?

— The informal forest management movement is spreading. In effect, it implies forests being taken over by communities and being managed as common property resources. What if informal forest protection committees evolve into fiercely independent bodies, hostile to the suggestion of joint management in future, and assert that caretakers of the forests are the rightful owners?

— In such a situation, attempts by government to reassert its ownership right may lead to widespread conflict and destruction of forests. What should be done at present to avoid this possibility? What kind of management systems should be evolved?

Is the present emerging system of community management of forests sustainable? Where is this likely to fail? Can support from outside increase the effectiveness of the system and add to its sustainability? What form should such an external support take and who should provide this?

Forest departments in the past has mainly assumed 'policing' role i.e 'keeping people out'. The new role of collaborating with people, will involve a major change in the role of foresters. What is required on the part of the forest department to face this challenge, and make use of the opportunity presented by this development?

Future strategies need to address these and other related issues.

CHAPTER 6

Future Strategies

The last decade has witnessed a change in perspective and outlook (to some extent at least) towards the relationship between the local population and the forests. The realisation that in order to keep local population away from the forest, it is important to provide for local needs led to Social Forestry. However, in effect, the strategy remained that of attempts to protect natural forests from the needs of the local population either by using strict rules or by creating village woodlots for fuel and fodder.

More recently, the trend has changed from viewing the local population as a problem to looking upon them as a part of the solution. Some state forest departments have experimented with joint management (West Bengal, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh). Many other state forest departments are yet to make use of the opportunity presented by the emerging trend of communities taking up forest protection and management.

It is necessary to ensure that existing and forthcoming forest protection efforts by communities are sustained over long term and to facilitate the spread of the phenomena to other areas. The overall (desired) goal is to evolve a system in which the forest department and village communities collaborate to manage forest resources on a sustained basis. If this goal is considered as desirable and achievable by the policy makers, implementors (present forest managers/administrators), as well as communities (as seems to be the case now), then detailed strategies need to be worked out.

6.1 Policy Support and Legal Endorsement

Policy support and issue of enabling government resolutions is crucial. Steps in this direction in the form of Government Resolutions in West Bengal, Orissa and Haryana providing for formation of Forest Protection Committees (Orissa, Rajasthan, Gujarat and West Bengal) and Hill Resource Management Societies (Haryana) for protection of Reserve Forest and June 1990 Resolution of Government of India (Annexure IV) for involvement of communities and NGOs in forest management, have already been taken.

In case of such government resolutions, it becomes important to avoid the directive form which these tend to take, and have them more as facilitating and enabling tools. Also, it is time that in this task communities are recognised as equal partners and the government abandons the patronising role it is so used to play. Target rushes need to be avoided. In such a task, the foresters as well as communities should give themselves enough time to cope up with the change required in their roles, responsibilities and duties.

6.2 Strategies for Protected Forest and Reserved Forest

Clear-cut strategies for Protected Forest and Reserved Forest need to be drafted. Discussions on the rights of communities (involved in forest protection) over PF and RF need to initiated.

6.2.1 Protected Forest

Though 61% of Orissa's forest is Protected Forest (PF); management of Protected Forest is altogether neglected. Not only the legal status but the physical situation of Protected Forest is peculiar in this state. Generally Protected Forests are in small patches (100-1000 ha.) interspersed with agricultural fields and surrounded by a number of villages. Exclusion is not only difficult but almost impossible. In such a situation we recommend that the start of participatory forest management systems should be made from the PF. It would be worthwhile to declare the PF patches already being protected by the villagers as Village Forests under the Orissa Village Forests Rules.

In view of community protection of PF, the responsibility of scrutinising this development, developing strategies and implementation of the same should be clearly fixed. Since it is suggested that PF be brought under the provisions of Village Forest Rules for their management; it is also suggested that Social Forestry Directorate, with its experience of working with communities, diversify to take up this task as well.

6.2.2 Reserved Forests

In case of Reserved Forests (RF) it is necessary to differentiate between degraded peripheral RF and well stocked RF. Though the Forest Department might not seek an active role of communities in the management and protection of well stocked RF at present, the need for the same for degraded RF is well recognised.

It is probably time that we start thinking of Social Forestry on degraded RF, not merely as rehabilitation of degraded forests by replanting, but in a broader perspective. Here we are using Social Forestry as a broad term—not in the limited sense this term has come to assume through "Social Forestry Projects".

For peripheral degraded Reserved Forest—a joint management system may be followed, with a joint management agreement between the Forest Department and the Forest Protection Committee (on behalf of the village community). The Orissa Government resolution of 1988 should be modified to spell out clearly the rights, the duties and the powers of the two partners—the village community and the Forest Department, so that forestry field staff and community participants have a clear understanding regarding the terms of management partnership.

For the partnership between the forest department and communities for forest management to be meaningful, it is necessary that the communities have a share in all the benefits accruing from the regeneration that takes place due to their efforts. Hence the communities should have a substantial share in the final harvest.

The decisions regarding the share in final tree harvest should be taken after a debate on the issue among community representatives, administrators, and policy makers. The benefit sharing within the community and penalty system should be left to the community to devise. In case they are unable to devise such systems, informal guidance could be given.

6.3 Communities as Partners in Managing Forests

6.3.1 *Community Organisation*

Strong community organisation is a prerequisite for effective community protection and management of forests. In many cases, strong informal village organisations for management of forests exist. In cases where effective organisations having a broad-based community participation do not exist, it becomes necessary to facilitate the formation of such organisations. Also at this stage the informal forest protection committees need to be formalised to give them legal endorsement. The transition/ transformation from informal to formal organisations should be made as smooth as possible, with efforts to retain the strengths viz. flexibility, representativeness, and acceptability by the community, of the informal organisations. The composition of new committees should be such that it incorporates these strengths. Necessary changes may be made in the existing Government Order for this. The process of formalisation or formation of new committees is very crucial and needs to be handled with utmost care.

6.3.2 *Training*

For effective community based management systems or joint management systems, transfer of managerial and technical skills to communities becomes essential. Training for nursery raising, gap planting, cleaning, coppicing, thinning etc. should be imparted to individuals in communities, so that they could act as local experts in forestry.

Some knowledge of economics of forests and market forces acting on it also needs to be given to the communities, so that they may understand the importance of forests in a broader context.

6.3.3 *Financial Support*

Financial support should be provided for enhancing the productivity of existing forests through gap planting, and for plantation of wastelands available in the area. A system of rewards and awards should be introduced to serve as an incentive for the communities.

6.4 Increasing Community's Stake in Forests

In order to sustain and expand the phenomena of community management of forests, it is vital to increase the community's stake in the continued existence of forests. Apart from a substantial share in the final harvest, Non Wood Forest Products (NWFP) require special emphasis. A local NWFP dependent economy will create a local stake in forest management. NWFP do not endanger the sustainability of forests. The need is to enhance the returns from NWFP to make the NWFP based local economy sustainable. The returns to the primary collectors of NWFP should be substantially increased through the policy of competitive off-take prices, improvements in collection methods, introduction of value addition at local level and support in form of marketing facilities.

To stabilise the process, it is essential that people understand the environmental importance of forests (as in Kesharpur). It is important that concern for trees, forests and environment gets internalised and become a part of their life and value system. Environmental awareness campaigns should be undertaken to achieve this end.

6.5 Checking Destructive Forest Usage

Another important observation is that in some cases communities protect a patch of forest in proximity, while meeting their needs from some other patch further away. Especially in case of Phulbani, local subsistence economy is based on destructive uses of forests viz. charcoal making, shifting cultivation and headloading. As emphasised earlier, strengthening of NWFP based local economy can be a partial solution to this.

The problem of headloading is intimately linked to the demand for fuelwood in the rural and urban areas. A concerted drive has to be launched to reduce the consumption of wood by rural and urban population. Indigenous fuel saving stoves developed in forest scarce areas need to be extensively promoted along with other improved cooking stoves and other energy alternatives like biogas. Along with these, generating alternate employment sources is also essential.

Thus, to increase the effectiveness of forest protection efforts by communities they need to be linked with measures to check destructive forest usage pattern (through energy alternatives) and also with other community development programmes.

6.6 Foresters as Facilitators of Community Participation

In the new environment foresters are required to play a dual role that of an administrator or a technocrat, and facilitator of community participation. The new role presents a challenge to the forest department, especially considering a twelve decade old tradition of strict custodian forest management of Indian Forest Service. It will not only require the reorientation and training of personnel in the forest department but also strengthening of the organisational structure as such and necessary training inputs to incoming forest officers.

6.6.1 Training and Orientation

In view of this challenge, detailed strategies would be required to orient and train the forest staff at all levels, to take up the new role as partners of communities in the task of regenerating and managing the forests. Orientation would be required at all levels of forestry staff, to facilitate the role-reversal from "policemen" to "partners" of communities. Orientation should be directed towards bringing the attitudinal changes conducive to learning from the accumulated experience and knowledge of communities. While field staff would require more "hands on" orientation, the middle and senior officials should have regular programmes for skill development, reorientation of attitude and updating knowledge on participatory models of community management. While training programmes for field staff could be arranged with the help of local NGOs, the formal programmes for senior and middle level officers should be arranged at national and international institutes working in this area. In fact, exchange of ideas or experience sharing among foresters from different states can contribute significantly to reorientation of forest officers.

Similarly the inputs in communication skills, interpersonal skills, extension and participatory micro level planning are necessary for the new generation of foresters. For this a foundation course of three months at Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM) should be made part of two year's training of IFS probationers.

6.6.2 Organisational Development

Though training and orientation of forestry staff is very important but it is also necessary to support increased capabilities of individual members of the organisation by strengthening the organisation as such.

With growth in the activities and the size of an organisation, and increasing complexity of external environment, the complexity of functions increases and

functional differentiation takes place in two directions—downwards and outwards. The pattern of functional growth is universal first down in the primary or line functions and secondly out into staff functions. The increased amount of same type of activities requires downward functional differentiation, while the complexity of activities requires outward functional differentiation. Secondary or staff functions are established in areas other than main line functions. The objective of these secondary functions is the assistance and facilitation of the performance of the line functions. It should be recognised that staff function is one that has been separated from the line for purpose of specialisation, and should be treated thus.

Since inception of forest department, not only the size of its activities has increased enormously, but also the nature and scope of its functions have diversified in the light of increasing complexity of the external environment. The new dimensions of functions have introduced a high level of complexity. Forestry organisations have not developed sufficiently to match these developments.

Organisational development in forest departments hence assumes special significance. Recognition of outward differentiation of functions and creation of suitable organisational structure to give place to specialists in staff positions is required. At present few staff positions have been created here and there. However, these are not manned by specialists. For example—training, extension, and monitoring and evaluation are not line functions, but they are manned by regular forest officers who are not specially trained in these aspects. Similarly for new aspects of forest management—community participation, a few staff positions would have to be created at different levels to enhance the effectiveness of the system.

Apart from increasing professionalism, especially in supporting staff functions, an over all openness and flexibility is required. The start should be made by relaxing the strict hierarchies in the forestry organisation and making the atmosphere conducive to frank discussions and feedback amongst various hierarchial levels. To facilitate this, the concept of 'Quality Control Circles' should be introduced. Emphasis should shift from physical target oriented efficiency to goal oriented effectiveness. Goals and objectives of the organisations should be clearly set, with attempts to have well defined verifiable objectives. Increased openness and flexibility should be incorporated in the forest department to keep pace with the new developments in forestry sector.

A Word of Caution

Organisational change is a continuous process. Major shift in organisational policies, procedures and attitudes takes time, even when social and organisational conditions are conducive to change. David Korten proposes a paradigm in which organisational capacity is developed in three phases through a learning process.

During Phase I, the organisation learns to be more effective through action research. The organisation learns to accept its past errors and learn from them: it learns how to involve people in the planning process and how to link learning with action. Staff members work with a small number of communities to better understand village needs and local issues. In Phase II the organisation learns to efficiently use and integrate the new methods of project planning and implementation developed during the first phase. Phase II also attempts to integrate the new procedures into the broader structure and operations of the organisation. Once "acceptable levels of effectiveness and efficiency have been obtained", Phase III—expansion can begin.

The appropriate speed for programme expansion and transition from one phase of organisational reorientation to the next depends on the agency's capacity to change its procedures and orientation, and the complexities of the reforms intended. If the change process moves too slowly, the programme will lose momentum, and in some cases collapse or become marginalised and would be unable to influence mainstream management practices. If the programme moves at a very fast pace, the quality of management system may fall short of expectations, which may lead planners to lose interest in the strategy and abandon the programme. It has already happened in a number of forestry programs. Thus the organisational change and expansion of pilot activities relating to community based forest management have to be carefully designed.

Conclusion

The forest communities possess a wealth of knowledge regarding their environment and how to sustainably manage forest lands to meet their needs. However, the community based forest management systems are in the evolutionary stage. Current levels of research, field experimentation, policy study and financial investments are woefully inadequate in responding to forest management problems. A massive increase in efforts to decentralise forest management and establish viable controls at the village level will be required if forest use is to be stabilised before the ecological functions and productivity of these important natural resources are lost.

We conclude by calling for accelerated, intensified and concrete efforts for the development of 'Community Based Forest Management Systems'.

Glossary

Aonla	Fruit of Emblica officinalis, a myrobalan.
Baheda	Terminalia bellerica, a myrobalan.
Bela	Woodapple (Aegle marmelos).
Chasa	A caste in Orissa. Literal meaning 'farmer'. Within 'Other Backward Castes' (OBC).
Juang	A tribe of Orissa.
Kendu	Diospyros meloxylon. Also called Tendu patta. Leaves used for rolling bidis.
Khesra Forest	Protected Forest is locally known as Khesra forest.
Khandaits	A caste (OBC).
Koli	Wild Berries.
Kotha	Village fund.
Mahua	A tree (Madhuca indica). Its flowers and seeds are important NWFPs.
Orissa Village Forest Rules	A part of Orissa Forest Act (1972). It provides the legal framework for declaration and management of village forest in Orissa.
Padar land	Marginal upland agricultural land.
Paik	A caste in Orissa.
Pallia	The person allotted patrolling duty for the day (see Thengapalli).
Pokasunga	A widespread shrub. Used commonly for fuel in fuelwood scarce area.
Sahi	Hamlet of village. Generally caste homogeneous.
Saura	Scheduled caste of Orissa.
Siali Leaves	Leaves of climber (Bauhinia spp) used for leaf plate making.
Thenga	A wooden stick
Thengapalli	Stick rotation. Method of rotational patrolling in which intimation of one's duty day is given by placing a stick at his door.

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ANNEXURE I

List of incidences in which members of BOJBP were able to persuade/ convince the villagers by using Gandhian tools.

1. July 1984: Mr. Joginath Sahu, Secretary BOJBP, wanted to plant trees on Malati hill. He managed to get seedlings for the purpose from the forest department. He requested the villagers to come forward to plant trees, but none turned up. Mr. Joginath Sahu along with his family members and a few volunteers stood by the roadside. They started touching the feet of the bypassers with a request to plant a few saplings. This kind of emotional appeal succeeded. One leprosy affected person was especially overwhelmed when his feet were touched.

2. June 1985: Two wage labourers engaged in stone quarrying threatened to uproot seedlings planted on Malati. Mr. Joginath Sahu held their feet. Later, he and his wife fasted on the issue and managed to dissuade these persons.

3. July 1985: Social Forestry Project initiated plantation activities in Badagorada. The Villagers were asked to clean the demarcated patch of forest. But some people went beyond the limits and collected firewood from where-ever they could, causing excessive damage to forests. Mr. Joginath and his two other colleagues visited the village and explained the consequences of destruction of forest. Mr. Joginath fell at the feet of those who were around. They promised to convene village committee meeting and take steps to stop destruction of forests. And they actually did so.

4. Herdmen from village Badagorada let loose their cattle, on the Binjgiri hill having an year old plantation. Four school teachers and 150 students went to Badagorada and lay prostrate in front of the herdmen's houses. The herdmen apologised and promised not to do so in future.

ANNEXURE II

Government of Orissa

Forest & Fisheries and AH Department

RESOLUTION

Dated, Bhubaneswar the 1st August, 1988

No. 10F (Pron)- 47/88/17240/FFAH

Sub: Protection of Reserved Forest areas by the Community

The question of involving village communities for effective protection and conservation of Reserved Forests was, for sometime past, under the active consideration of Government. After careful appraisal, Government is of the view that the task of protecting forests is so urgent and so enormous that the rural community should be fully and actively involved in it. Accordingly, it has been decided that the following scheme of involving the rural community will be implemented in the State. Under this scheme, villages will be assigned a specific role in the protection of Reserved Forests adjoining their villages and will, in return,be granted, under section 24 of the Orissa Forest Act, 1972, certain concessions in the matter of meeting their bonafide requirement of firewood and small timber.

(1) The concerned Divisional Forest Officer shall assign the peripheral Reserved Forest areas to the adjoining villages according to the compartment line. The area in one compartment may cover one or more villages. Wherever the compartment line does not exist, natural boundary like nalla, bridges etc. will form the demarcation point. Reserved Forest area notified under Section 18 (1) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 will, however, be excluded from the purview of the assignment.

(2) The concerned D.F.O. shall constitute a Forest Protection Committee for each of the assigned villages. The committee shall comprise the Sarpanch of the concerned Gram Panchayat, the Ward Members belonging to the village, the local Forester, Revenue Inspector, V.L.W. and such other persons of the said village not exceeding three as may be nominated by the concerned Gram Panchayat. The total number of the members of the Committee shall be at least eight which shall, as far as possible, include persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes or Tribes, women and landless categories. The Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat and the local Forester shall be the Chairman and Convenor of the Committee respectively.

(3) The villages shall, through the Forest Protection Committee, furnish an undertaking to the concerned D.F.O. for proper upkeep and maintenance of the

assigned Reserved Forest areas. The assigned villages shall be responsible for fire protection and prevention of illicit fellings, thefts of forest produce and encroachments in the assigned Reserved Forest areas. The Forest Protection Committee shall be responsible for ensuring performance of the above functions by villagers of the assigned villages.

(4) For performance of the duties enumerated in Para-3, the villages shall be entitled to obtain their bonafide requirements of small timber and firewood for household consumption only and not for sale or barter. The Forest Protection Committee shall be responsible for proper distribution of small timber and firewood among the households, keeping in view the following guidelines:

(a) The minimum requirement of the households for building and agriculture purpose should be worked out by the committee and the distribution made accordingly on the basis of available produce, before meeting their demand for other purposes.

(b) As regards supply of firewood, the same shall be apportioned among the households keeping in view their real requirement as far as possible.

(5) Small timber and firewood shall be removed from the assigned Reserved Forest areas only in accordance with a permit issued by the two members of the committee authorised for the purpose. The permit issued as above shall be valid only within the limits of the village boundary to which the household belongs.

(6) The above scheme of assignment will come into force with effect from 2.10.88. In the intervening period, the DFOs will assign specific Reserved Forest areas in the periphery to the adjoining villages and constitute the Forest Protection Committee.

Order

Ordered that the Resolution be published in the extra-ordinary issue of the Orissa Gazette.

By Order of the Governor
P.K. Mohanty
Secretary to Government

Government of Orissa
Forest & Fisheries and AH Department

RESOLUTION

Dated, Bhubaneswar the 13th October, 1988
No. 10F (Pron)- 47/88/23638/FFAH

Sub: Protection of Reserved Forest Areas by the Community

A scheme for involving the rural community in the task of protecting Reserved Forests throughout the State has been enunciated by the Government in the Resolution No. 17240-FFAH Dated 1.8.88. Para-2 of the aforesaid Resolution envisages constitution of a village-level Forest Protection Committee comprising the Sarpanch of the concerned Gram Panchayat, the Ward Members belonging to the village and at the most 3 other persons of the village, to be nominated by the concerned Gram Panchayat, as the non-official members. In addition, the local Forester, Revenue Inspector and the V.L.W. are to be included as official members.

2. After careful re-appraisal, it is now felt by the Government that the committee should be constituted in consultation with the local villagers.

3. Therefore, in partial modification of Para-2 of the aforesaid Resolution, it has been decided that the non-official members of the village-level Forest Protection Committee may be selected by convening a meeting of the concerned villagers. However, the Sarpanch of the concerned Gram Panchayat and the forester shall be the Chairman and Convener of the committee respectively.

Order

Ordered that the Resolution be published in the extra-ordinary issue of the Orissa Gazette.

By Order of the Governor
P.K. Mohanty
Secretary to Government

Government of Orissa

Forest & Fisheries and AH Department

No. 10F (Pron)- 47/88/27328/FFAH dated 14.12.88

From

Shri J.K. Mohapatra, IAS
Joint Secretary to Government

To

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests,
Orissa, Cuttack

Sub: Protection of Reserved Forest Areas by the Community

Sir,

I am directed to refer to your letter No. 23370/9F-Legal-65/88 dated Ist December, 1988 and to say that the adjoining villagers assigned the functions of protection, up-keep and maintenance of the peripheral reserve forest areas would be entitled to obtain their bonafide requirement of small timber and firewood for household consumption free of cost. They need not pay royalty as prescribed in the 'Rules on Schedule of Rates for Forest Produces in Orissa, 1977'. This clarification may be brought to the notice of all concerned.

Yours faithfully,
Sd/- **J.K. Mohapatra**
Joint Secretary to Government

ANNEXURE III

Government of Orissa

Forest, Fisheries and AH Department

No. 10F (Pron)- 4/90/ 29525/FFAH, Bhubaneswar, dated 11.12.1990

RESOLUTION

Sub: Protection of Reserved Forest and Protected Forest Areas by the Community and enjoyment of certain usufructs by the Community

The question of involving village community for effective protection and conservation of Reserved Forest and Protected Forest was for some time past, under active consideration of Government. After careful consideration Government is of the view that the task of protecting forest is so urgent and enormous that the community should be fully and actively involved in it. Accordingly, it has been decided that the following scheme of involving the rural community will be implemented in the State. Under this Scheme, villagers will be assigned a specific role in the protection of Reserved Forest and Protected Forests adjoining their villages and will, in return, be granted under Section 24 of the Orissa Forest Act, 1972 certain concessions in Reserved Forest taking into account prevalent practice and rights, if any in respect of Protected Forest in the matter of meeting their bonafide requirements of firewood and small timber.

(1) The concerned Divisional Forest Officer shall assign the peripherial Reserved Forest and Protected Forest area to the adjoining villages according to the compartment line. The area in the compartment, may cover one or more villages. Wherever the compartment line does not exist, natural boundary like nalla, bridges, etc. will form the demarcation point. Reserved Forest areas notified under Section 18 (1) of the Wild Life Protection Act 1972, will however be excluded from the purview of the assignment.

(2) The concerned Divisional Forest Forest Officer shall constitute a Forest Protection Committee for each of the concerned villages in consultation with the local villagers. The Committee shall comprise the Sarpanch of the concerned Gram Panchayat, the ward members belonging to the village, the local Forester, Revenue Inspector, V.L.W. and such other non-official members of the village to be selected by convening a meeting of the concerned villagers. The total number of the Committee shall be at least 8 which shall, as far as possible, include women and persons belonging to S.C. or S.T. and the landless categories. The Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat and the local Forester shall be the Chairman and convenor of the Committee respectively.

(3) The villagers shall, through the Forest Protection Committee, furnish an undertaking to the concerned Divisional Forest Officer for proper upkeep and maintenance of the assigned Reserved Forest and Protected Forest areas. The assigned villages shall be responsible for the fire fighting and prevention of illicit fellings, theft of forest produce and encroachements in the assigned Reserved Forest and Protected Forest areas. The Forest Protection Committees shall be responsible for ensuring performance of the above functions by villagers of the assigned villages.

(4) For performance of the duties enumerated in Para 3 the villagers shall be entitled to obtain their bonafide requirement of small timber and firewood for household consumption only, and not for sale or barter. The Forest Protection Committee shall be responsible for proper distribution of small timber and firewood among the households, keeping in view the following guidelines.

(a) The minimum requirements of the household for building and agricultural purposes should be worked out by the Committee and the distribution made accordingly on the basis of available produce, before meeting their demands for other purposes.

(b) As regards supply of firewood, the same shall be apportioned among the households keeping in view their real requirement as far as possible.

(5) Small timber and firewood shall be removed from assigned Reserved Forests and Protected Forest areas only in accordance with a permit issued by the two members of the Committee authorised for purpose. This permit issued as above shall be valid only within the limits of the village boundary to which the household belongs.

(6) This supercedes this Department's Resolution No 17240/FFAH, dated 1.8.88 and No. 23638/FFAH, dated 13-10-88.

Order

Ordered that the Resolution be published in the next ordinary issue of the Orissa Gazette.

By Order of the Governor
P.K. Mohanty
Secretary to Government

Memo No. 29526/FFAH, Bhubaneswar, dated 11.12.90

Copy forwarded to all Departments of Government/Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Orissa/All Revenue Divisional Commissioners/All Collectors for information and necessary action.

sd/-
Under Secretary to Government

Memo No. 29528/FFAH, dated 11-12-90

Copy forwarded to the Director of Printing, Stationery and Publication, Orissa, Cuttack with the request to publish it in the extra-ordinary issue of the Orissa Gazette. He is requested to send 200 copies of it to this Department.

sd/-
Under Secretary to Government

Memo No. 29527/FFAH, Bhubaneswar, dated 11.12.90

Copy forwarded to all Conservator of Forests/All Divisional Forest Officers (Territorial) for information and necessary action.

sd/-
S. Sahoo
Under Secretary to Government

ANNEXURE IV

No. 6-21/89-F.P.
Government of India
Ministry of Environment and Forests
Department of Environment, Forests and Wildlife
Paryavaran Bhavan, C.G.O. Complex, B-Block,
Lodi Road, New Delhi.

To

Dated: Ist June, 1990.

The Forests Secretaries
(All States/UTs)

Sub: Involvement of village communities and voluntary agencies for regeneration of degraded forest lands

Sir,

The National Forest Policy, 1988 envisages people's involvement in the development and protection of forests. The requirements of fuelwood, fodder and small timber such as house-building material, of the tribals and other villagers living in and near the forests, are to be treated as first charge on forest produce. The Policy document envisages it as one of the essentials of forest management that the forest communities should be motivated to identify themselves with the development and protection of forests from which they derive benefits.

2. In a D.O. letter No. 1/1/88-TMA dated 13th January, 1989 to the Chief Secretary of your State, the need for working out the modalities for giving to the village communities, living close to the forest land, usufructory benefits to ensure their participation in the afforestation programme, was emphasised by Shri K.P. Geethakrishnan, the then Secretary (Environment and Forests).

3. Committed voluntary agencies/ NGOs, with proven track record, may prove particularly well suited for motivating and organising village communities for protection, afforestation and development of degraded forest land, especially in the vicinity of habitations. The State Forest Departments/Social Forestry Organisations ought to take full advantage of their expertise and experience in this respect for building up meaningful people's participation in protection and development of degraded forest lands. The voluntary agencies/ NGOs may be associated as interface between the State Forest Departments and the local village

communities for revival, restoration and development of degraded forests in the manner suggested below:

(i) The programme should be implemented under an arrangement between the Voluntary Agency/NGO, the village community (beneficiaries) and the State Forest Departments.

(ii) No ownership or lease rights over the forest land should be given to the beneficiaries or to the Voluntary Agency/NGO. Nor should the forest land be assigned in contravention of the provisions contained in the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

(iii) The beneficiaries should be entitled to a share in usufructs to the extent and subject to the conditions prescribed by the State Government in this behalf. The Voluntary Agency/NGO should not be entitled to usufructory benefits.

(iv) Access to forest land and usufructory benefits should be only to the beneficiaries who get organised into a village institution specifically for forest regeneration and protection. This could be the Panchayat or the Cooperative of the village, with no restriction on membership. It could also be a Village Forest Committee. In no case should any access or tree pattas be given to individuals.

(v) The beneficiaries should be given usufructs like grasses, lops and tops of branches, and minor forest produce.... If they successfully protect the forests they may be given a portion of the proceeds from the sale of trees when they mature. (The Government of West Bengal has issued orders to give 25% of the sale proceeds to the Village Forest Protection Committees. Similar norms may be adopted by other States).

(vi) Areas to be selected for the programme should be free from the claims (including existing rights, privileges, concessions) of any person who is not a beneficiary under the scheme. Alternatively, for a given site, the selection of beneficiaries should be done in such a way that any one who has a claim to any forest produce from the selected site is not left out without being given full opportunity of joining.

(vii) The selected site should be worked in accordance with a Working Scheme duly approved by the State Government. Such scheme may remain in operation for a period of 10 years and revised/renewed after that. The Working Scheme should be prepared in consultation with the beneficiaries. Apart from protection of the site, the said Scheme may prescribe requisite operations, eg. inducement to natural regeneration of existing root stock, seeding, gap filling, and wherever necessary, intensive planting, soil moisture conservation measures etc. The Working Scheme should also prescribe other operations eg. fire-protection, maintenance of boundaries, weeding, tending, cleaning, thinning etc.

(viii) For raising nurseries, preparing land for planting and protecting the trees after planting, the beneficiaries should be paid by the Forest Department from the funds under the social forestry programme. However, the village community may obtain funds from other Government agencies and sources for undertaking these activities.

(ix) It should be ensured that there is no grazing at all in the forest land protected by the village community. Permission to cut and carry grass free of cost should be given so that stall feeding is promoted.

(x) No agriculture should be permitted on the forest land.

(xi) Along with trees for fuel, fodder and timber, the village community may be permitted to plant such fruit trees as would fit in with the overall scheme of afforestation, such as aonla, imli, mango, mahua etc. as well as shrubs, legumes and grasses which would meet local needs, help soil and water conservation, and enrich the degraded soils/land. Even indigenous medicinal plants may be grown according to the requirement and preference of beneficiaries.

(xii) Cutting of trees should not be permitted before they are ripe for harvesting. The forest department also should not cut the trees on the forest land being protected by the village communities except in the manner prescribed in the Working Scheme. In case of emergency needs the village communities should be taken into confidence.

(xiii) The benefit of people's participation should go to the village communities and not to commercial or other interests which may try to derive benefit in their names. The selection of beneficiaries should therefore, be done from only those families which are willing to participate through their personal efforts.

(xvi) The Forest Department should closely supervise the works. If the beneficiaries and/or the Voluntary Agency/NGO fail or neglect to protect the area from grazing, encroachment or do not perform the operations prescribed in the Working Scheme in a satisfactory manner, the usufructory benefits should be withdrawn without paying compensation to anyone for any work that might have been done prior to it. Suitable provisions in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for this purpose should be incorporated.

Yours faithfully

Sd/-

(Mahesh Prasad)

Secretary to the Government of India

Copy for information and necessary action to:

1. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests/Chief Conservator of Forests (All State/UTs).
2. Additional Secretary, National Wasteland Development Board, Ministry of Environment and Forests New Delhi.
3. Chief Conservator of Forests (Central) of all Regional Offices located at: Bhubaneshwar, Bangalore, Bhopal, Shillong, Lucknow, Chandigarh.
4. All DIGFs including N.W.D.B., New Delhi.
5. All Officers of the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

Sd/

(K.M. Chadha)

Joint Secretary to the Government of India.

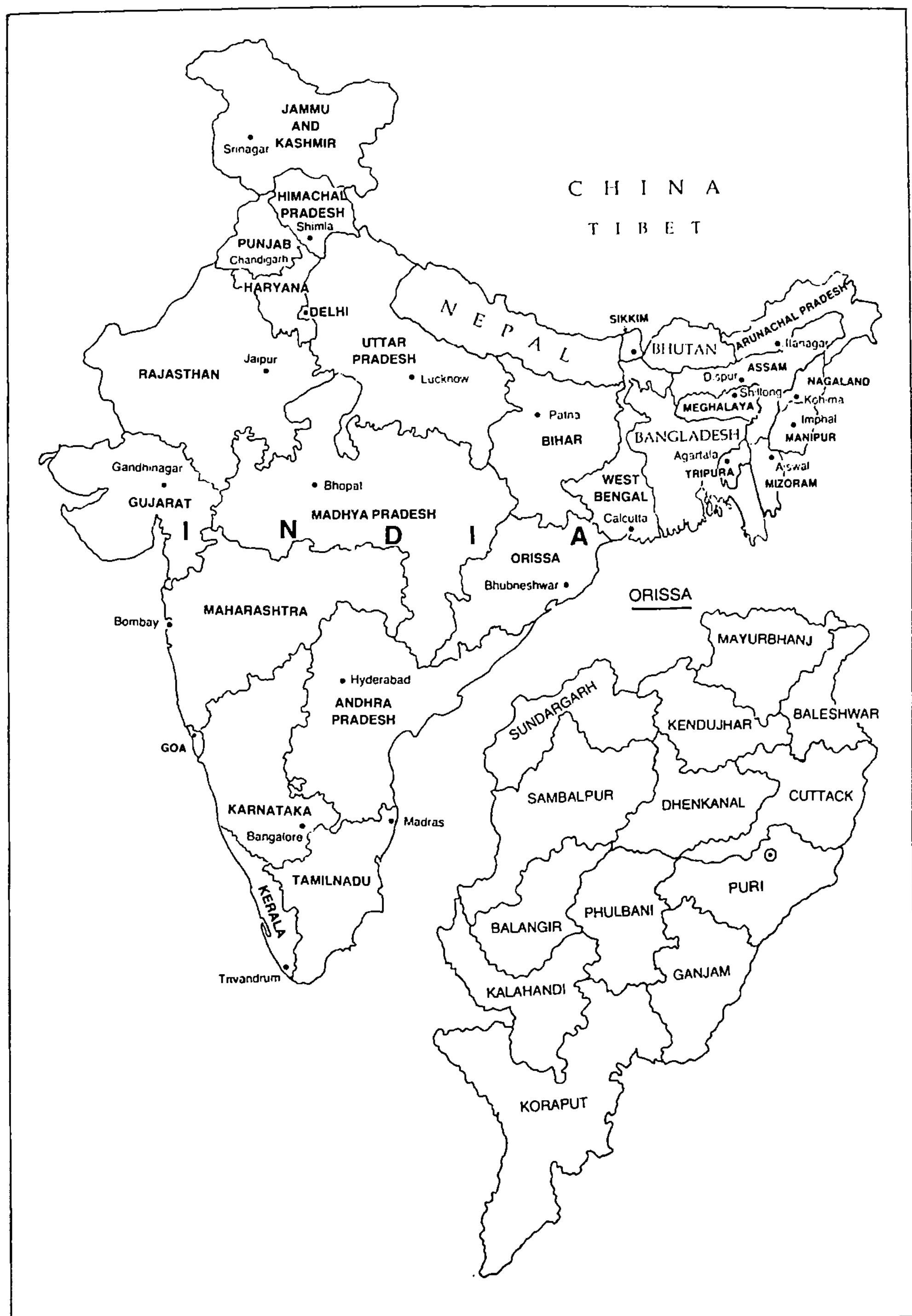
Copy for information to the

1. Secretary (Co-ordination), Cabinet Secretariat, Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delh
2. Secretary, Ministry of Welfare, New Delhi.
3. Secretary, Department of Rural Development, New Delhi.

Sd/

(K.M. Chadha)

Joint Secretary to the Government of India.


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KORAPUT



Juang kids at the patch of forest being protected by the Juang Sahi, Mahapada, Rupabalia R.F.